I. Lord Buddha and His Teachings, Fundamentals and Essence of Buddhism

Veneration to the most Exalted one,
The Homage-Worthy,
The Perfectly Self-Enlightened,
The most Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent one.

Lord Buddha and His teachings.

Lord Buddha ***Gotama***, who was a prince of ***Kapilavatthu*** country at the border of present India and Nepal, was born in **623 BC** in ***Lumbini*** of Nepal. He became enlightened under the Bo Tree in Bodh Gaya, Bihar Province, India, at the age of 35 after 6 years of the most rigorous search of truth and liberation. For 45 years until His entry into ***Parinibbāna*** at the age of 80 in **543 BC** at ***Kushinagar.*** India, He had turned the wheel of ***Dhamma*** and preached his ***Dhamma,*** incessantly to all beings-multitudes of human, ***devas*** and other spiritual persons, so that like Himself, they may be delivered from all sufferings and became enlightened. Important places connected with Lord Buddha are shown in the appendix. **Appendix(1)**

His teachings, systematically organized, as will be explained later, are really vast and substantial but He said that what He preached amounted to just a fistful of dried leaves as compared to what He realized and actually knew, like all the dried leaves in the forest.

Buddhism had its birth at ***Sarnath*** near Benares of India, when Lord Buddha preached ***Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*** or The Wheel of ***Dhamma*** to five ***Bikkhus*** soon after his Enlightenment. With five followers at the beginning it penetrated into many countries and is today the religion of more than 600 millions. One of the reason for this growth is, never did the messengers and followers of ***Buddha's Dhamma*** and the teachings use any violent and nefarious methods in spreading the ***Dhamma***. The only weapon use was that of love and compassion.

Buddhist missions after the ***Mahāparinibbāna*** of Lord Buddha never carried force of arms nor used any coercive or reprehensible methods. Conversion by compulsion was unknown among the Buddhists, and no decrying of other creeds had ever existed in Buddhism, which therefore was able to diffuse through a great variety of cultures throughout the civilized world.

The teachings of Lord ***Buddha*** expounded during His long and successful ministry and which He unreservedly bequeathed to humanity still exists in its pristine purity.

In ***Theravāda*** Buddhist Literature, there are three levels of books concerning the teachings of Lord ***Buddha***, as follows:

(1) The Texts regarded as teachings of the ***Buddha***,known as ***Tipiṭaka*** or three baskets of original scriptures.

(2) Commentaries compiled by various ***Mahā Theras*** explaining the Texts, known as ***Aṭṭhakathā.***

(3) Sub- commentaries explaining the commentaries, known as ***ṭīkā.***

Tipiṭaka or Three Baskets of Scriptures

Tipiṭaka or the three baskets or divisions of Buddhist scriptures, as shown in the appendix, consist of the followings:-

(1) *Vinaya Piṭaka* – disciplines or precepts to be followed by the ***Saṅgha*** or monks in 5 Books consisting of 21,000 components;

(2) ***Sutta Piṭaka*** – Sermons or discourses delivered by Lord Buddha, in 5 Books consisting of 21,000 components;

(3) ***Abhidhamma Piṭaka*** – Ultimate or supreme ***dhamma*** in 7 Books consisting of 42,000 components; **Appendix(2)**

All these components together constitute 84,000 ***Dhamma*** components.

The other types of grouping is groups (***Nikai*** or ***Nikāya***) according to length of each sermon or ***sutta***. In this way, three Baskets of ***Piṭaka*** are grouped in 5 groups as follows:-

(1) ***Dīgha Nikāya*** - Long discourses of 33 nos

(2) ***Mijjima Nikāya*** -Medium Length discourses of 152 nos

(3) ***Saṁyutta Nikāya*** -Kindred or connected short discourses of 7760 nos

(4) ***Aṅguttara Nikāya*** -Numeral short discourses of 9560 nos

(5) ***Khuddaka Nikāya*** -Minor short discourses of 32 Books (inclusive of five Books of ***Vinaya*** and 7 Books of ***Abhidhamma***)

Vinaya Piṭaka

This is embodied in 5 Books of rules and regulations to be followed by ***Bikkhu*** and ***Bikkhunī***. There are 227 main rules and million of detailed rules.

Abhidhamma Piṭaka

This is what Lord Buddha preached to Spiritual beings or Devas headed by His Mother ***Mahā Māyā***, for 3 months during 7th year after His enlightenment. Lord Buddha recounted these sermons to His senior Disciple Ven. ***Sāriputta***. The ***Abhidhamma Piṭaka*** is treated as ultimate ***Dhamma*** and it consists of 7 Books.

Sutta Piṭaka

This embodied thousands of sermons and discourses delivered by Lord Buddha, which essentially deal with the way to liberation or ***Nibbāna***.

Fundamentals and Essence of Buddhism

In this paper, from the viewpoint of attaining liberation by ***Vipassanā*** Meditation, out of all teachings in ***Sutta Piṭaka*** which comprise discourses to be followed by all beings-human or ***deva***, the subjects shown in the chart are chosen as the basic fundamentals or essence of Buddhism. **Appendix(3)**

Since every subject in the charts formed a basic for many scriptures and discourses, here only a brief and cursory explanation could be given as follows:-

Three Refuges

A person becomes a Buddhist when he takes refuge in ***Buddha***, ***Dhamma*** and ***Saṅgha***.

Four Sublime States of Living

They are also known as ***Brahmavihāra Dhamma*** which means Noble living or living in the exercise of goodwill. They consist of four parts-***Mettā***, loving kindness or friendliness, ***Karuṇā,*** compassion, ***Muditā***, appreciative joy or goodwill or rejoicing with others in their success, happiness, prosperity, and ***Upekkhā***, equanimity or indifference taking a neutral attitude without discrimination. Lord Buddha taught how to cultivate these qualities for the sake of one's own benefit and of other sentient beings.

Three Admonitions and Three Practices

The essence of ***Buddha*** teachings is embodied in the following three admonitions of Lord ***Buddha*** :-

(1) To abstain from all evil/ unwholesome deeds;
(2) To do all good/ meritorious deeds;
(3) To make the mind pure and clean;

The first two admonitions correspond to the first two basic practices of ***Dāna*** and ***Sīla***. The last admonition of making the mind pure and clean corresponds to practice of ***Bhāvanā*** or meditation.

Here is a short exposition on ***Dāna*** and ***Sīla:-***

Dāna-chairity, donation or alms-giving

Dāna had been given very important role in Buddhism. It is the first virtue or quality out of ten virtues which the Lord Buddha had to fulfill to perfection for many lives before He attained Enlightenment. ***Dāna*** has:-

- the characteristic of relinquishing (what one owns),
- the function of destroying the greed,
- the manifestation of non-attachment,
- the proximate cause of things to be offered.

It is said that, Lord ***Buddha***, on delivering a sermon, normally started with ***"Dāna Kathā"*** or about ***Dāna***.

In the Buddhist scriptures, the following facts inter alia, relating to ***Dāna*** are mentioned in great details:-

(1) Kinds of giving or ***Dāna,***
(2) Causes or objectives and bases of giving,
(3) Giving principles of noble or worthy persons,
(4) Things to be offered to ***Saṅgha,***
(5) Hindrances of giving things away,
(6) Requirements to make donation perfect,
(7) Blessings and benefits of ***Dāna***,
(8) How ***Dāna*** contributed towards attainment of ***Nibbāna***.

From the point of view of ***Bhāvanā***-meditation, the act of perfect ***Dāna*** truly destroys the greed or attachment which is one of the causes of turning the Wheel of ***Samsāra***, and makes the donor joyous or happy which is very beneficial in his practice of meditation.

Sīla or Moraliy

Just like ***Dāna, Sīla*** or Morality has been given important role in Buddhism and great emphasis of its importance has also been given in practicing ***Bhāvanā***. It is the second virtue or quality which the Lord ***Buddha*** had to fulfill for perfection for countless lives before He became Lord ***Buddha***. ***Sīla*** has:-

- the characteristics of not allowing one's actions wrong,
- the function of spotless and blameless conduct,
- the manifestation of purity in words and deeds,
- the proximate cause of moral shame and moral dread.

The following facts, inter alia, relating to ***Sīla*** are mentioned at great length in the Buddhist Scriptures:-

(1) Morality sets of 2 kinds, 3 kinds, 4 kinds, 5 kinds
(2) Benefits and advantages of moral virtue or good conduct
(3) Qualities of moral persons
(4) Ways to purify morality
(5) Benefits for approaching and paying homage to virtuous monks,
(6) Different types of ***Sīla***- 5 precepts, 8 precepts, 9 precepts, 10 precepts, etc.

From the point of view of ***Bhāvanā***-meditation, observing good moral conduct is conducive to attaining various ***Vipassanā ñāṇa*** and that is why the meditation yogis are required to observe and keep 8 precepts or 9 precepts in a meditation centre.

Even though a person may not be able to practise ***Vipassanā*** meditation, if he practices ***Dāna*** and ***Sīla*** very well in his life, the scriptures say that after his death he will not be born in 4 nether worlds, but in human or ***deva*** worlds. However, ***Dāna*** and ***Sīla*** are regarded as the second-class heritage while ***Bhāvanā*** is regarded as the real heritage of Lord ***Buddha***.

Bhāvanā-meditation

According to Buddhist Scriptures there are three types of meditation:-

(1) ***Samatha Bhāvanā***- calming and tranquility meditation which comprises 40 subjects of meditation, leading towards 4 stages of

Rūpa-Jhāna and 4 of *Arūpa-Jhāna,* with possible possession of supernatural and superphysical powers, but not to *Nibbāna.*

(2) ***Samatha*-oriented *Vipassanā*-** practising ***Samatha*** using it as a vehicle for the attainment of ***Vipassanā ñāṇa***.

(3) ***Vipassanā Bhāvanā*-** as taught and trained in Mahāsi Sāsana Yeikthā, leading one to different stages of ***Magga, Phala*** and fruition and finally to ***Nibbāna***. This is called ***Suddha-Vipassanā Yānika*** method, where one practises purely in ***Vipassanā*** insight meditation without any prior ***Samatha*** meditation.

The actual aim of ***Buddha's*** teachings is to stop the recurring wheel of ***Samsāra*** which always bring about bodily and mental sufferings of old age, disease and death, and to attain ***Nibbāna*** in the shortest duration as possible.

In tune with this aim, of all the teachings of Lord Buddha, from the aspect of meditation practice, it is considered that the most important teachings or discourses are contained in the following two sermons;

(1) The first is ***Dhammacckkappavattana Sutta*** also called the Wheel of ***Dhamma*** – which was the first sermon delivered by Lord ***Buddha***, outlining the Four Eternal Truths of

Suffering, Cause of Suffering, Cessation of Suffering, and the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering, and also the Middle Way of Noble Eightfold Path. This sermon was delivered on the full moon day of Waso month (June/July) **589 BC** or about 2605 years ago after His Enlightenment to the group of 5 ***Bikkhus*** or monks at ***Sarnath***, which is about 7 miles from Benares of India. The Four Noble Truths are the priceless message Buddha gave to humanity for their guidance, to help them to get rid of sufferings and to attain the absolute reality of ***Nibbāna.***

Incidentaily, this ***Sutta*** was the one ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** delivered at the time he arrived at the Mahāsī Yeikthā, and it was also delivered on 8th August 1982 before his passing away on 14th August.

(2) The second one is the ***Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*** which was delivered by Lord Buddha to the monks while He was staying at ***Kammāsadhamma*** town of ***Kuru*** State (now Delhi State, India). The practice of mindfulness according to this ***Sutta***, Buddha declared that, is the only way that leads to passing beyond sorrow and lamentation, cessation of sufferings and miseries, pain and grief, cleaning from moral impurities, and to the attainment of Right Path and finally to the realisation of ***Nibbāna.*** He outlined the four foundations of mindfulness as the contemplation of the body, feelings, mind and mind-objects.

When the ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** began to initiate the first batch of 25 yogis into Insight Meditation on 4th December 1949 at this Meditation Centre, he explained the expositions of ***Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā***, its purpose, the method of practice and the benefits derived therefrom. These exposition had been given daily to every batch of meditating yogis up to now, as the practising ***yogis*** are fully aware of.

II. Six Buddhist Synods or Councils

The Six Buddhist Synods or Councils were held, with the main objective of preserving and maintaining the ***Buddha's*** Teachings. The first four Synods had been held in India and Sri Lanka during 450 years after the ***Parinibbāna*** of Lord ***Buddha***, and the last two were held in Myanmar after 2400 to 2500 years, as follows:-

Time	Year (***Sāsanā***/Christ)	Place	Duration	No of Monks	Sponsor
First	1- 544 BC	India-***Rājgiri***	7 months	500	***King Ajatasatth,***
Second	100- 444 BC	India-***Vesālī***	8 months	700	***Kālāsoka***
Third	235- 309 BC	India-***Patana*** (***Pātaliputta***)	9 months	1000	***Āsoka***
Fourth	450- BC 94	***Srilankā-Malaya***	1 year	500	***Vattagāmani***
Fifth	2415- AD 1871	Myanmar-Mandalay	3 years	2400	Mindon
Sixth	2498 – AD 1954	Myanmar-Yangon	2 years	2500	Prime Minister U Nu

This is shown in the map as per appendix. **Appendix(4)**

Mahā Kassapa convened the **First Synod**, so that ***Dhamma*** and ***Vinaya*** would be prevented from being corrupted and to protect and preserve the teachings of Lord ***Buddha***.

There was no written records of the teachings and ***Thera Ashin Ānandā***, the brother of Lord ***Buddha*** and the monks who learnt the teachings by heart had to recite them and groups of monks cross-checking with each other so that no errors and omissions were made. They were compiled into ***Vinaya Piṭaka*** and ***Sutta Piṭaka***, memorized by the monks and handed down by oral tradition.

Because of the breaches of conduct by a group of monks, Venerable ***Revata*** convened a council of 700 monks in ***Vesālī***, India known as the **Second Synod**, where they re-affirmed the teachings of Lord Buddha by reciting the ***Dhamma*** and ***Vinaya*** together.

King ***Āsoka***, converted to Buddhism by a young novice ***Nigrodha,*** spread Buddhism throughout India by building countless stupas, temples, rock edicts and pillars, and monasteries and by providing generous support to the ***Saṅgha***, and when he found that, many unwholesome and greedy people joined the ***Saṅgha*** and preached wrongful teachings, he reported the matter to ***Moggaliputta Tissa Thera*** who convened the **Third Synod** with 1000 monks and recited and re-affirmed the ***Dhamma*** and ***Vinaya.*** After that, missionary monks were sent to nine different regions including Sri Lanka where ***Tipaṭaka*** was compiled into writing about 300 years later.

Around AD 140, Sri Lanka faced a Civil war and foreign invasion making thousands of people died from starvation and Buddhism declined as a result since its teachings were passed down orally. That is why, ***Mahā Theras*** with great foresight tried to preserve the teachings by writing them on palm leaves. This task was headed by ***Mahā Dhamma Rakkhita*** and 500 monks and done in ***Āloka*** Cave of ***Malaya Village*** under the patronage of King ***Vaṭṭagāmani.*** This is regarded as the **Fourth Synod** according to ***Theravāda*** Buddhism.

Incidentally, at this time another Buddhist Council took place in ***Kashmir,*** India under the patronage of King ***Kanishka,*** presided over by ***Vasumita*** and ***Asvaghosa*** who was a great ***Mahāyāna*** scholar, and ***Buddha's*** teachings according to the ***Mahāyāna*** tadition were compiled into Sanskrit.

At the **Fifth Synod** taking place in Mandalay the entire ***Tipiṭaka*** were inscribed in Pāḷi on 729 white marble slabs which are still kept at ***Kuthodaw*** Pagoda at the foot of Mandalay hill. After that 2400 monks headed by Venerable monks of ***Sudhammā*** Group recited all the teachings of the Buddha. These slabs formed the basis of the revision work during the Sixth Synod.

Of the **Sixth Synod** held in Yangon, since it was connected with ***Mahāsī Sayādaw***, it is treated in a separate heading of this paper.

III. The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar

Theravāda Buddhism flourishes in Myanmar. But when, how, and by whom it was brought into Myanmar?

According to legends, oral histories and written records like stone/palm leaf inscriptions, etc. Buddhism arrived in Myanmar NOT once and continuous, but a few number of times, and only after ***Tipiṭaka*** appeared in Myanmar, the growth of Buddhism thrived and its growth became continuous. **Appendix(5)**

The first arrival-in connection with the legion of the world famous Shwe Dagon Pagoda

This legend described the first arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar when, a few days after Lord ***Buddha*** became enlightened in 589 BC, two merchant brothers named ***Taphussa*** and ***Bhallika*** from ***Ukkalāpa*** Village of ***Ramaññadesa*** came to pay respect Lord Buddha and offered Him honey cakes and other edibles. Lord ***Buddha*** after preaching them, gave eight sacred Hairs to them, at their request. On their return they were welcomed by King ***Ukkalāpa*** in full ceremonies, and the King enshrined the sacred Hairs and relics of three previous ***Buddhas*** in a ***ceti*** or pagoda on full moon of Tabaung (March), around 589 B.C. on the hill known as ***Siṅguttara*** and this ***ceti*** became known as Shwe Dagon Pagoda. This legend of the pagoda was mentioned in stone inscriptions laid by King ***Dhammazedī*** (AD 1472-1491) in the precinct of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. This is regarded as the earliest and first arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar, though it did not flourish continuously afterwards.

The Second arrival in Thaton previously known as *Sudhammapura*

According to the various stone inscriptions, in **581 BC** during the 8th ***Vasa*** or 8 years after Enlightenment of Lord ***Buddha***, He visited Thaton at The request of the ***Arahat*** called Shin ***Gavampati*** and delivered Sermons to the people who became Buddhists. Lord ***Buddha*** gave a Hair to each of the six hermits to worship. This is regarded as the first arrival of Lord ***Buddha*** in Myanmar in person.

The Third Arrival in *Sunāparanta* in Minbu District and Dannyawaddi in Rakkhine

At the request of ***Mahā Puṇṇa Thera***, Lord ***Buddha***, in about **569 BC,** visited ***Sunāparanta*** Village with His 500 disciples and stayed for a while at a monastery built of Sandal wood, where a ceti which became known as Kyaung Taw Ya Ceti was built. The Blessed one also left two footprints at Minbu Hill Range which became famous as Shwe Set Taw. After Lord ***Buddha*** and His disciples left, ***Mahā Puṇṇa Thera*** remained behind to propagate the ***Buddha Dhamma.***

Acoording to Rakkhine Chronicles, in the same year **569 BC**, Lord ***Buddha*** and His 500 disciples visited ***Dhaññavatī*** whose King ***Candasūriya*** and all the people became Buddhists after listening to the preachings of Lord ***Buddha***. At the request of the King an alloy image in the likeness of Lord ***Buddha*** was cast, and this image had been brought to ***Amarapūra*** during the reign of King ***Bodawpaya*** (AD 1782-1819) and later transferred to Mandalay when it became famous as ***Mahā Myat Muni*** Image.

The Fourth Arrival in Tahton

After the holding of Third Buddhist Synod in Patna of India in **309 BC**, forseeing the end of ***Buddha Sāsanā*** in India, and its spread in other places, the senior ***Arahats*** despatched 9 missioneries to nine different regions. Thus, ***Mahā Thera Sona*** and ***Uttara*** came to Thaton to spread ***Buddha's Dhamma*** there again. At that time the ***Buddha Sāsanā*** which arrived three times as mentioned above had declined. After the arrival of ***Mahā Threa Sona*** and ***Uttara***, due to their teachings, people took refuge again in three Treasures of ***Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha*** and Buddhism started to flourish again.

The Fifth Arrival in the form of written Scriptures

Around **AD 386**, Buddhist Scriptures of ***Tipiṭaka*** written in Sri Lanka Language were translated into ***Magadha*** by famous ***Mahā Thera Buddhaghosa*** and the translated works were brought to King ***Dhammapāla*** of Thaton.

In **AD 1053**, Shin ***Arahan*** of Thaton arrived in Bagan during the reign of the great King ***Anawrathā,*** and introduced pure form of Buddhism which in fact was ***Theravāda*** Buddhism, as distinct from ***Mahāyāna*** and other sects of Buddhism. The King then, after a war with King ***Manuhar*** of Thaton, took the written ***Tipiṭaka***, Buddhist relics and 3000 missionary monks from Thaton to Bagan in **AD 1057**.

Although the first glimpse of Buddhism was seen in Myanmar even during the lifetime of Lord ***Buddha***, it was firmly established only after the arrival of Shin ***Arahan***, and written ***Tipiṭaka*** and Buddhist Monks in **AD 1053-1057**. From these times, Buddhism in pure form of ***Theravāda Buddhism***, a Buddhism as preached and handed over generation to generation by learned elder monks took root and flourished in Myanmar up to the present time. It is also believed that this ***Theravāda*** Buddhism will be maintained and preserved in Myanmar in the future generations as well.

The facts mentioned in this chapter are based on a small paper prepared by Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt, an eminent historian and scholar. However, there are a number of Buddhist scholars, historians and archeologists who had entirely different views expressed in various papers and books.

IV. A Short Biography of Mahāsī Sayādaw

The Venerable ***U Sobhana Mahāthera***, better known as Mahāsī Sayādaw, was born on 29 July 1904 to the peasant proprietors, U Kan Taw and Daw Ok at Seikkhun Village, which is about seven miles to the west of the town of Shwebo in Upper Myanmar, once the capital of King Alaung Phaya, the founder of the last Myanmar dynasty.

At the age of six he began his studies at a monastic school in his village, and at the age of twelve he was ordained a ***Sāmaṇera***, (Novice) receiving the name of ***Sobhana***. On reaching the age of twenty, he was ordained a ***Bhikkhu*** on 26 November 1923. He passed the Government ***Pāḷi*** Examinations in all the three classes (lower, middle and highest) in the following three successive years.

In the fourth year of his ***Bhikkhu*** Ordination, "1927" he proceeded to Mandalay, noted for its pre-eminence in Buddhist studies, where he continued his further education under various monks of high scholastic fame. In the fifth year "1928" he went to Mawlamyaing where he took up the work of teaching the Buddhist scriptures at a monastery known as "Taung-waing-galay Taik Kyaung".

In the eighth year "1931" after his ***Bhikkhu*** ordination, he and another monk left Mawlamyaing equipped with the eight requisites of a ***Bhikkhu*** (i.e. alms bowl, a set of three robes, etc.), and went in search of a clear and effective method in the practice of meditation. At Thaton in March 1932, he met the well-known Meditation Teacher, the Venerable U ***Nārada***, who is also known as Mingun ***Jetavun Sayādaw*** the First. He then placed himself under the guidance of the Sayādaw and at once proceeded with an intensive course of meditation.

He had progressed so well in his practice that he was able to teach the method effectively to his first three disciples in Seikkhun on full moon day of Kason, 1300 (M.Era)(13th. May 1938)while he was on a visit. There, following the example of these three, as many as fifty villagers gradually joined the courses of intensive meditation practice.

The Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw could not stay with the Venerable Mingun Sayādaw as long as he wanted as he was urgently asked to return to the Mawlamyaing monastery. Its aged head monk was gravely ill and passed away not longer after the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw's return. The Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw was then asked to take charge of the monastery and to resume teaching the resident monks. During this time he sat for the Pāḷi Lectureship Examination on its first introduction and on the first attempt, in 1941 he passed the Examination and was awarded the title of ***"Sāsanadhaja Sirī Pavara Dhammācariya".***

On the event of the Japanese invasion, the authorities gave an evacuation order to those living near Mawlamyaing at the Taung-waing-galay Monastery and its neighborhood. These places were close to an airfield and hence exposed to air attacks. For the Sayādaw this was a welcome opportunity to return to his native Seikkhun and to devote himself whole-heartedly to his own practice of ***Vipassanā*** meditation and to the teaching of it to others.

He took residence at a monastery known as Mahāsi Kyaung, which was thus called because a drum (Myanmar-si) of an unusually large (Mahā) size was housed there. From that monastery, the Sayādaw's popular name, Mahāsi Sayādaw, is derived.

It was during this period, in 1945, that the Sayādaw wrote his great and one of his most famous works, "A Practical way of ***Vipassanā*** Insight Meditation", a comprehensive and authoritative treatise expounding both the doctrinal and the practical aspects of the ***Satipaṭṭhānā*** method of meditation. This work of two volumes, comprising 858 pages in print was written by him in just seven months, while the neighboring town of Shwebo was at times subjected to almost daily air attacks. Volume (1) had been translated into English and was published under the title "A Practical Way of ***Vipassanā*** (Insight Meditation)" in 1980 and Volume (2) is under preparation and will soon be published.

It did not take long before the reputation of Mahāsī -Sayādaw as an able teacher of Insight Meditation (***Vipassanā***) had spread throughout the Shwebo-Sagaing region and attracted the attention of a prominent and very devout Buddhist layman, Sir U Thwin, who was regarded as Myanmar's "Elder Statesman". It was his wish to promote the inner strength of Buddhism in Myanmar by setting up a meditation centre to be guided by a meditation teacher of proven virtue and ability. After meeting Mahāsī Sayādaw and listening to a discourse given by him and to the meditation instructions given to nuns in Sagaing in 1947, Sir U Thwin was in no doubt that he had found the ideal person he was looking for.

In 1947 the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization was founded in Yangon by a group of elders including Sao Shwe Thike, the first President of The Union of Myanmar and U Nu, the first Prime Minister, with Sir U Thwin as its first President of The Organization. A separate chapter is devoted to the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization.

In 1949, the then Prime Minister of Myanmar, U Nu and Sir U Thwin requested the Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw to come to Yangon and give training in meditation practice. On 4th. December 1949, the Sayādaw introduced the first group of 25 meditators to the methodical practice of ***Vipassanā*** meditation. Within a few years of the Sayādaw's arrival in Yangon, similar meditation centres sprang up all over Myanmar, until they numbered over one hundred. In neighboring ***Theravāda*** countries like Thailand and Sri Lanka, such centres were also established in which the same method was taught and practiced.

Branch Meditation Centres

According to the Annual Report of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization for the year 2014, as of 31st December 2014, there are altogether 594 Mahāsī Branch Meditation Centres in the whole of Myanmar and 37 Centres abroad as follows.

(1)	Bangladesh	1
(2)	United States of America	25
(3)	Singapore	1
(4)	Japan	1
(5)	Malaysia	1
(6)	England	3
(7)	France	1
(8)	Taiwan	2
(9)	South Korea	2
(10)	Canada	1
		37

Number of Meditators/Yogis

Since the introduction of first batch of 25 yogis on 6th December 1949. The number of meditators/yogis has increasing over the years totalling 17,310,695 on 31st December 2014.

Out of these yogis who had meditated at this Centre, according to the records of Women Devetees Association, during the period from 1967 to 31st March 2015, the number of yogis who have reached a satisfactory stage of meditation and therefore allowed to listen to the tape recorded discourse of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** on "Progress of Insight Through the Seven Stages of Purification (Seven ***Visuddhi***)"came up to 68323.

At the historic Sixth Buddhist Council (***Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā***) held at Yangon for two years, culminating in the year 2500 Buddhist

Era (1956), the Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw had played very important roles. These are so much significant and important that it is treated in a separate chapter.

In the midst of all of these tasks, he was also a prolific and scholarly writer. He authored more than 100 writings and translations, mostly in Myanmar, with a few in the ***Pāḷi*** language. His discourses are also mentioned in a separate chapter.

In 1957 Mahāsī Sayādaw was awarded the title of ***"Aggamahāpaṇḍita".*** Yet even all of this did not exhaust the Mahāsī Sayādaw's remarkable capacity for work in the cause of the Buddha-***Dhamma***. He undertook several travels abroad. The first two of his tours were in preparation for the Sixth Council, but were likewise used for preaching and teaching. His foreign travels were as follows;

Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam (1952)
India and Sri Lanka (1953, 1959)
Japan (1957)
Indonesia (1959)
America, Hawaii, England, Continental Europe (1979)
England, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand (1980)
Nepal, India (1981)

In the midst of all these manifold and strenuous activities, he never neglected his own meditative life which had to give wise guidance to those instructed by him. His outstanding vigor of body and mind and his deep dedication to the ***Dhamma*** sustained him through a life of 78 years.

On 14 August 1982, the Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw succumbed to a sudden and severe cerebral stroke which he had suffered the night before. Yet on the evening of the 13th, he had still given an introductory explanation to a group of new meditators.

The Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw was one of the very rare personalities in whom there was a balanced and high development of both profound erudition linked with a keen intellect, and deep and advanced meditative experience. He was also able to teach effectively both Buddhist thought and Buddhist practice.

His long carrier of teaching through the spoken and printed word had a beneficial impact on many hundreds of thousands of people in the East and the West. His personal stature and his life's work rank him among the great figures of contemporary Buddhism.

Places in Myanmar connected with Mahāsī Sayādwgyi is shown in the appendix. **Appendix(6)**

V. Mahāsī Sayādaw's teaching of Insight Meditation

Since the arrival of ***Tipiṭaka*** and 3000 monks in Bagan from Thaton, Buddhism in pure form of ***Theravāda*** Buddhism flourished in Myanmar. From that time onwards, the ***Saṅgha*** or monks studied Buddhist scriptures, wrote commentaries, sub-commentaries and taught the novices and monks. In other words, the ***Pariyatti*** aspect of Buddha ***Sāsanā*** had been maintained and preserved utmost up to the present time. Many famous ***Sayādaws*** had appeared in the scene of ***Pariyatti Sāsanā.***

As for the ***Pariyatti*** aspect of Buddha ***Sāsanā***, from time to time, there had been monks who practiced meditation, and who had reached the final stage of ***Magga, Phala,*** Fruition. There are many written records in Myanmar about these fully liberated monks.

However for the ordinary lay Buddhists, in the past, they practised ***Dāna, Sīla*** only and many were under the impression that ***Bhāvanā*** or meditation was meant for monks and recluses and not for them. Only a small number of lay Buddhists, practised meditation but ***Samatha*** meditation most of the time.

At the time when Mingun ***Jetavun Sayādaw*** started teaching ***Vipassanā*** Meditation around 1910, to the people for whom the ***Vipassanā*** Meditation was new and strange, he had been subject to great ridicule by many lay persons.

Mahāsi Sayādaw's teaching

He taught his first three disciples at Seikkhun in 1938 and first batch of 25 yogis in December 1949 at the Mahāsī Sāsana Yeikthā. During water festival of April 1958, when he delivered his series of discourses under the title "The Fundamentals of ***Vipassanā*** Meditation", that is what he said :-

> "Today insight meditation needs no special introduction. Everybody is saying that it is good. The contrary was the case 20 years ago .... when we began preaching insight meditation we had had a hard time doing so......... Today people keep asking us to lecture on insight. But when we begin to telling them the simple facts of insight meditation they seem unable to appreciate them. So they have had no grounding in meditation to understand anything.
>
> Some think calm is insight. Some talk of insight meditation as nothing different from calm meditation. The insight meditation as preached by some people .... proves just impossible to practise. .... For the benefit of such people we will talk about the elements of insight meditation."

Hence, it could be said that ***Vipassanā*** Insight Meditation revived since the time Mahāsī Sayādaw initiated first batch of meditators in December 1949. Within a few years, increasing number of meditators came to Mahāsī Sāsana Yeikthā to practise insight-meditation, and many branch Meditation Centers sprang up all over the country and other foreign countries, as mentioned in previous Chapter.

Mahāsī Sayādaw had delivered many discourses and almost all of which were transcribed, printed and published. These discourses comprised the profound ***Dhamma*** based on selected ***Suttas*** which were harmonised with the practical aspect of ***Vipassanā*** or insight meditation effectively with an analytical approach so as to enable everybody to understand clearly. Below is an outline of his teachings on ***Vipassanā*** Insight Meditation for those not familiar with meditation:-

Purpose of Practising Meditation

Meditation should be practised to realize ***Nibbāna***, thereby relinquishing all kinds of miseries and stopping the wheel of ***Sam̆sāra***.

Suddha-Vipassanā Yānika Meditation

Of the three types of meditation mentioned in Chapter I, this is the method mainly used and taught by Mahāsi Sayādaw based on ***Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā*** Meditation methods of mindfulness, whereby the yogi dwells on practising one or more of the four foundations of mindfulness viz: noting or contemplating on body, feelings, mind and mind-objects. Guidance of a well qualified meditation teacher is necessary so that the yogi can practise in a systematic manner towards development of concentration and insight.

The name of Mahāsī Sayādaw and Sāsana Yeikthā are usually associated with the words of "rising" and "falling" of the abdomen because he taught this method of noting the rising and falling of abdomen, which method had been in vogue ten years earlier to Mahāsī revival of the method, which had also been approved by the Mingun ***Jetavun Sayādaw***.

Mahāsī Sayādaw used this method because rising and falling of abdomen is one of the obvious phenomenal occurrences in the body that are amenable to comprehension by the meditating yogi. But this method is not compulsorily enforced by the Sayādaw so that yogis who wished to meditate by other means such as noting breath inhaling and exhaling were also permitted to do so.

Meditation Programme

By the programme of meditation carried out in the Sāsana Yeikthā, a yogi is to practise meditation by sitting alternated with walking meditation. When the yogi is not doing sitting or walking meditation, the yogi is required to practise mindfulness and awareness diligently at all times, in all of the bodily activities and movements and also in mental activities until he realizes various stages of ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa, Magga, Phala***, and ***Fruition.***

Out of these meditators many meditators-monks and laymen alike who practiced for long time like 2 or 3 months, reached higher stages of ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa, Magga, Phala*** and Fruition.

Training of Meditation Teachers

In the history of the Mahāsi Sāsana Yeikthā 2 famous lay disciples named Sayā Kyan (1907-1976) and Sayā Kywet (1900-1950), became assistant meditation teachers of Mahāsi Sayādaw at the Seikkhun Mahāsi Meditation Centre. They began their meditation practice in 1938 when Mahāsi Sayādaw started his teaching. Their achievement in the practice had been commended by the Sayādaw himself, and under his instruction they interviewed and gave guidance to the meditators.

In 1945, as per the instruction of Mahāsi Sayādaw, they had compiled a book titled "Records of Meditation Teachers" and described in details, the problems and experiences of the meditators at each stage of ***ñāṇa*** (insight) and how they have solved these problems and guided the various meditators until they reached a satisfactory stage.

This book is of great value to the meditation teachers and those experienced meditators aspiring to become a meditation teacher. Some attempts have been made to translate this book into English, and published in 2009, but these books have been withdrawn because of numerous printing errors and omissions. This translation is now under revision, and soon will be published.

Since this book is meant to help the qualified ***Vipassanā*** Meditation teachers, the following injunctions made by ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** are worthy of note:-

(1) Those who had not attained the full 16 levels of ***Vipassanā ñana*** or Knowledge should not be allowed to look at this book, and they should avoid the book even if they come across it.

(2) For a Yogi who truly and honestly believes in the ***Mahāsī*** Method of ***Vipassanā*** Meditation, who also wishes to practise

systematically, if there is nobody to guide him/her, this book can be used as a guide, but he/she should not think about this book while meditating.

The 16 levels of ***Vipassanā Ñāṇa*** are listed in Appendix(7)

Qualifications required of a lay meditation teacher

At a meeting of meditation-teacher monks all over the country, held from 30th June 1952 to 2nd July 1952 at ***Mahāsī Sāsana*** Yeikthā, rules and regulations relating to ***Satipaṭṭhāna Yogis*** were discussed and finalised by Mahāsī Sayādaw and published around August/ September 1952. In these rules, all meditating yogis- laymen and monks, meditating according to the methods taught by Mahāsī Sayādaw were named "***Mahāsī Satipaṭṭhāna*** Group" and detailed rules were prescribed for the followings:-

(1) Meditation teachers-monks,
(2) Lay meditation teachers,
(3) Monks yogis,
(4) Lay yogis,
(5) Meditation Centres.

The lay meditation teachers are required to hold the following qualifications:-

Pariyatti or Scriptual qualifications

(1) he must have a reasonable knowledge of Buddhist Cannons and have a thorough wisdom of ultimate reality,

(2) he must be able to memorize and recite ***Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*** in ***Pāli*** and ***Nissaya*** (that is with Myanmar translation);

(3) he must be fully conversant with Mahasi Sayādaw's Discourses on " A Practical way of ***Vipassanā***- Insight Meditation" and "Records of Meditation Teachers" (as mentioned above)

Paṭipatti qualifications

(1) he must be respectable person with good morality,

(2) he must have meditated completely according to the methods of Mahāsī Sayādaw and well experienced in interviewing / examining yogis,

(3) he must have the six qualities of a ***Nāyaka*** (elder/leader) namely patience, awake- fullness, effort, supporting others, compassion and wisdom.

In the opinion of the compiler of this paper, any lay person, aspiring to become a meditation teacher in Mahāsī tradition, must hold the above qualifications, in addition to the attainment of high stage of ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa***. He should also be meditative all the time under all circumstances and able to enter into ***Janic*** trance in a very short time. He should also be fully acquainted with all the discourses of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw***.

VI. Mahāsī Lineage and Posterity

As mentioned earlier, the immediate Meditation teacher of ***Mahāsi Sayādaw*** was the Venerable Mingun ***Jetavun Sayādaw - Nārada Thera*** (1869-18.3.1955) whose practice of meditation descended from Theelon Sayādaw ***Candimā Thera*** (1785-1860) in an unbroken continuity. Again, according to the various scriptures Theelon Sayādaw's lineage can be traced back to ***Shin Arahan*** of

Bagan, whose lineage was said to be of Venerable ***Upāḷi*** who was one of the immediate disciples of Lord Buddha.

Venerable *Upāḷi Thera*

He was one of the forty left side immediate disciples of Lord ***Buddha***, and when the first Buddhist Synod was held after the ***Mahāparinibbāna*** of Lord ***Buddha***, he was said to be in charge of reciting the ***Vinaya Piṭaka*** since he was bestowed and recognized as the highest disciple in the area of following and mastering ***Vinaya*** (rules and regulations for monks.)

His disciple was ***Ven.Dasaka*** whose disciple was Ven. ***Sonaka. Ven.Sonaka*** had two disciples named ***Ven. Siggava*** and ***Ven. Candavajjī*** who became the teachers of ***Ven. Moggaliputta Tissa.***

Venerable *Moggaliputta Tissa*

He convened and headed the third Buddhist Synod, and after completion, considered the state of Buddha ***Sāsana*** in future. When he foresaw the decline of Buddha ***Sāsana*** in India and that it would be well established outside India, he sent elder ***Theras*** to nine regions as mentioned in Chapter II.

Venerables *Sona* and *Uttara*

They were sent to ***Suvaṇṇabhūmi*** (Thaton), and from then onwards, successive ***Theras*** had not been broken up because there had been succession of these disciples until Venerable ***Arahan*** who appeared in Bagan during the reign of King Anawrahta.

Venerable *Arahan*

At his suggestion King Anawrahta brought missionary monks and ***Tipiṭaka*** from Thaton to Bagan after which successive ***Theras*** appeared until the time of Thaton Mingun Sayādaw.

Thus, a brief sketch of Mahāsī Sayādaw's lineage could be drawn roughly in the chart as per appendix. **Appendix (8)**

How Mahāsi Sayādaw met Mingun ***Jetavun*** Sayādaw Venerable ***U Nārada*** and how he proceeded with intensive course of meditation had been mentioned earlier. Here it would be much relevant to mention some important points about Theelon Sayādaw and Mingun Sayādaw. Important places connected with these Sayādaws are shown in the map. **Appendix(9)**

Theelon Sayādaw Ven.Candimā.

He was born in 1785 near a village called Boke Kone in Shwebo Distinct, and was initiated into monk at the age of 20, with U ***Vicārinda*** Sayādaw as his preceptor. He studied various Buddhist scriptures, especially ***Vinaya Piṭaka***, under U ***Vicārinda*** who was said to be the lineage of Venerable ***UPāḷi's*** successive disciples. After he resided in a monastery donated to him at Theelon village in the same Shwebo Division, he became known as Theelon Sayādaw in 1818.

While staying at Theelon Village he had compiled a number of famous Buddhist scriptures and taught to many monks out of which ***Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayādaw, Mingun AlaieTawya Sayādaw*** and first ***Shwe Kyin Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Jāgara,*** became the mentors of Mingun ***Jetavun*** Sayādaw.

Around the age of 61 a very significant event happened, which turned ***Theelon Sayādaw*** into the ***Paṭipatti*** or Meditation practice. One friend called Venerable ***Khemā*** of ***Kinywa Vihāra,*** popularly known as ***Kintawya Sayādaw***, who was the meditation practitioner visited ***Theelon Sayādaw*** occasionally and talked about Buddha ***Dhamma*** and urged him to go into meditation practice. Theelon ***Sayādaw*** was adamant to do so, citing many reasons after another. At the last meeting, ***Kintawya Sayādaw*** exhorted ***Theelon Sayādaw*** to stay in the Buddha ***Sāsanā*** with good perseverance, and steadfast mindfulness, and after saying these, he flew into the sky. ***Theelon Sayādaw*** was dumb-founded and decided to go to him next day to receive his teachings on meditation.

However, the next day, he learnt that ***Kintawya Sayādaw*** had passed away during the night. From that time onwards, he left all his ***Pariyatti*** functions, and entered into forest retreat and practised meditation for six years reaching a very high standard of ***Magga, Phala*** and Fruition, and attaining many super-physical powers as well. At one time, at the ceremony of ordination hall at Shain Ma Kar Village in Shwebo Distinct, at the request of the various ***Mahā Theras***, he delivered a discourse of how he had meditated, how the various ***Vipassanā ñāṇa*** were gained, how ***Magga***, ***Phala*** and Fruition were realized, and how he reached ***Anāgāmi Magga*** and ***Phala***. When the ***Theras***, much appreciating his discourse, requested him to compose this discourse, he refused by saying that, if what he experienced were not in agreement with the scriptures he could easily clarify while he was alive, but when he passed away there could arise unnecessary disputes among the readers.

Although Theelon ***Sayādaw*** had not made any compilation about his meditation practice, it was handed to his many disciples especially Mingun Aleitawya Sayādaw Venerable ***Mañjūsa***.

Sayādaw passed away on 1860 at the age of 75, 8 years after King Mindon became king.

Mingun *Jetavun* Sayādaw Ven. *Nārada Thera*

Sayādaw was born in 1868 at Kangyikone Village in Sagaing. He became a novice at the age of 14, studied various Buddhist Scriptures and completed 5 Books of ***Vinaya*** in 11 years. After he was ordained as a monk he pursued further studies of ***Pariyatti*** and became an accomplished writer of Commentaries. While he studied and taught ***Pariyatti*** at ***Aleitawya*** Monastery, when asked by ***Aleitawya*** Sayādaw, he replied that he studied so that he would realize ***Nibbāna***. ***Aleitawya*** Sayādaw just mentioned that you could realize ***Nibbāna*** just by ***"Butan Butataw Pathati".*** (it means knowing it as it is). Just from this extremely short sermon, Ven. ***Nārada*** understood what was to be done, and he left the monastery at the age of 37 to enter into forest retreat alone. He started to practise meditation, and three years after, realized a satisfactory stage of ***Vipassanā ñāṇa.***

Then, he left the forest retreat and started teaching his ***Vipassanā*** meditation methods. His teachings were so simple like: if you go note that you go, if you stand note that you stand, if you sleep note that you sleep, if you eat note that you eat, etc., which were all the more strange to the yogis, that he had been ridiculed by many persons at first. However, when the yogis started to realize ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa*** by his teachings he became famous and went around many townships to teach his meditation method. At last he arrived at

Thaton, and in 1914 a Meditation Centre was established where he himself practised, taught and wrote various discourses.

Many monks and lay persons became his disciples who in turn became meditation teachers. As mentioned earlier, Mahāsi Sayādaw arrived and became his disciple on 11st March 1932, and after 4 months of intensive meditation practice under Mingun Sayādaw's teachings and guidance, he reached a very high stage of ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa***, and later became a world famous meditation teacher.

Mingun Sayādaw's disciples had also opened Meditation Centres all over the country. Sayādaw had trained many disciples to become meditation teachers, and after that he wrote his teaching methods in a discourse under the title of "New method of ***Visuddhi Magga*** Commentary" which became a famous reference book for meditation teachers.

Sayādaw, after carrying out numerous activities for Buddha ***Sāsanā*** finally passed away on 18.3.1955 at the age of 86.

Theelon Sayādaw and Mingun ***Jetavun*** Sayādaw were two remarkable meditation teachers of Mahāsī Sayādaw. From the above chronicle it could be deduced that Mahāsī Sayādaw was of the lineage of the famous Venerable ***Upāḷi***, an immediate disciple of Lord Buddha ***Gotama***.

Mahāsī Posterity

During his life time, Mahāsī Sayādaw had taught ***Vipassanā*** Insight Meditation to monks and laymen, local and foreign alike. Many of his direct senior disciples had also been able to establish various Meditation Centres throughout the country. After his passing away in August 1982, the following presiding ***Ovādācariya Sayādaws*** who were the Chief Disciples of Mahāsī Sayādaw shouldered the responsibility of the Mahāsī Sāsana Yeikthā at Yangon, and generation after generation the succeeding disciples of these Sayādaws will bear this responsibility also.

No	Name	Period
1	***Bhaddanta Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa*** (1921- -------)	1982-1990
2	***Bhaddanta Ā cikkhaṇa*** (1908-1996)	1990-1996
3	***Bhaddanta Paññāsippa*** (1919-2001)	1997-2001
4	***Bhaddanta Saṃvara*** (1920-2010)	2002-2010
5	Dr. ***Bhaddanta Jaṭila*** (1935- -------)	2011-2015

Among His chief disciples who were trained directly by him, the followings are most promiment, who were able to establish various Mahāsī Meditation Centre throughout the country and abroad.

(1) Venerable ***Sujāta*** (1909-1982)

(2) Shwe Taung Gon ***Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Panditābhivansa*** (1921-)

(3) Pathein ***Thaddhamma Thitagū Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Ā cikkhaṇa*** (1908-1996)

(4) Shwe Yae Saung ***Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Paññāsāmi*** (1914-1998)

(5) Chan Mya Aung Sī ***Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Samvara*** (1920-2010)

(6) Yae Oo ***Sayādaw*** Venrable ***Paññāsippa*** (1920-2001)

(7) ***Dhammananda Vihāra Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Sīlānandābhivamsa*** (1927-2006)

(8) ***Thaddhammaranthī Sayādaw*** Venerable ***Kuṇḍalābhivamsa*** (1927-2006)

Some of the Sayādaws have been able to open meditation centres in foreign countries like, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Australia, England, America, Indonesia, Thailand, South Africa, Mexico, Jamaica and so on.

Many foreigners had meditated under the guidance of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** when he was alive, and some of them in turn continued to propagate ***Vipassanā*** Meditation after their return to the respective native countries. Out of these foreigners who were truly the chief disciples of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw***, the followings are considered most prominent:

(1) Venerable ***Nyanaponika***, Sri Lanka,

(2) Reai Admiral E.H. Shattock, author of "An Experiment in Mindfulness"

VII. *Tipiṭaka* Examinations and the Sixth Buddhist Synod

One of the objectives of founding the Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization on 13rd November 1947 was to hold the ***Tipiṭaka*** examination and thereby promoting ***Pariyatti Sāsanā*** to the utmost. The first President of the Organization Sr U. Thwin donated 5.488 acres of land to build the necessary buildings and it was named ***"Sāsana Yeikthā"*** on 14th November 1948, one year after the founding of Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization. After compiling and approving the rules and regulations for holding the ***Tipiṭaka*** examination at the 12th meeting of the Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization, it was decided to hold the first examination on 9th January 1949. The opening ceremony was held in grand manner, at the ***Sāsana Yeikthā***, well attended by the Cabinet Ministers headed by the President and Prime Minister themselves. Six candidates entered the oral examination held for 18 days, with 5 days gap. They had to answer, about 5½ hours every day, with 3 hours on the opening day, thus the whole oral examination took about 96½ hours. Unfortunately no candidate passed the first oral examination.

The Second Examination

The Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization decided that the whole project would be cancelled if no candidate passed the second examination to be held in 1951. Luckily, at the suggestion of U Pwint Gaung who was, at that time, the youngest member of the Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization at the age of 34, Venerable ***Paññāsāra***, who had successfully recited the 5 books of ***Vinaya Piṭaka*** previously was urged to enter the second examination, despite his great reluctance since he had the bent of doing ***Paṭipatti*** only. When he arrived at the ***Sāsana Yeikthā***, it was ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** who guided him before he sat for the examination.

So the second examination was held in due course on 25th December 1949 with 5 candidates including Ven. ***Paññāsāra***. This time the examination took 26 days to complete and Ven. ***Paññāsāra*** was the only candidate who passed the oral recital of 5 books of ***Vinaya*** covering 1988 pages. He was greatly honored for his success at the residence of the Union President on 16th February 1950.

Venerable *Vicittasārābhivaṁsa*

Because of the success of U ***Paññāsāra***, it became possible to hold the ***Tipiṭaka*** examinations continuously from year to year, and they were held at Fan Yin Hall of Mahāsi Yeikthā for 46 years until 46th examination in 1995. Venerable ***Vicittasārābhivam·sa*** entered and passed oral and written ***Tipiṭaka*** examinations as follows:-

No	Time	Examination	Held on	Passed
(1)	First time	3rd	29.1.51	***Vinaya Piṭaka*** with distinction
(2)	Second time	4th	23.11.51	***Abhidhamma*** Part I with distinction
(3)	Third time	5th	28.12.52	***Abhidhamma*** Part II with distinction
(4)	Fourth time	6th	2.15.53	***Sutta Piṭaka*** with distinction

He was thus awarded with the title ***"Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika"*** by the Government, and was the first ***Tipiṭakadhara*** to appear in Myanmar.

At the time Ven. ***Vicittasārābhivaṃsa*** passed the ***Tipiṭaka*** examinations, it was before the holding of the Sixth Buddhist Synod and therefore only the ***Pāḷi*** texts of 20 Books covering 8,026 pages had to be recited orally by him from his phenomenal memory. It is his success as the first ***Tipiṭakadhara*** to appear in 1953, which become one of the great underlying forces to be able to hold the Sixth Buddhist Synod next year in 1954.

When the mission including Mahāsi Sayādaw visited Thailand and met the Chief Monk (***Sāsanā***-paing), they apprised him of the fact relating to the Sixth Synod and explained that because of the relentless and sustained efforts of the Myanmar ***Saṅghas*** in promoting ***Pariyatti*** and ***Paṭipatti Sāsanā***, an eminent personage who was able to recite the whole of ***Piṭaka*** from memory had now emerged in Myanmar. The Chief Monk then gave his assent for the holding of the Sixth Synod and that Thailand will participate in this momentous event.

The Sixth Buddhist Synod

When the Sixth Buddhist Synod was held in 1954-1956, Ven. ***Vicittasārābhivaṁsa*** took the responsibility and dual roles of sifting, arraying and amending the ***Piṭaka*** scriptures as well as of answering and explaining the questions put to him by Mahāsi Sayādaw on ***Piṭaka*** Scriptures. Both Sayādaws were the members of the organizing committee or the Central Committee with full authority of the Sixth Buddhist Council.

Both Sayādaws were born and emerged at the opportune time for the holding of this Sixth Buddhist Synod. They were so compatible to each other that everything went off smoothly without a slightest hitch at the Synod. They had discharged their duties ably fitting the glory of ***Sangāyanā*** which was made possible by their wonderful attributes.

VIII. Sixth Buddhist Synod and Mahāsi Sayādaw

Soon after Myanmar gained independence on 4th January 1948, the Government headed by very pious and religious-minded Prime Minister U Nu decided to hold the Sixth Buddhist Council to coincide with the 2500th Anniversary of the ***Mahāparinibbāna*** of Lord Buddha, with the objective of promoting, improving the Buddha ***Sāsanā*** as well as ensuring that Buddha teachings will be preserved and maintained for a further 2500 years. Also one of the purpose of holding this Synod was to correct some of the glaring mistakes noticed on the marble slabs erected in the Fifth Synod.

Preparation for the Synod

In 1950 the Union Buddha ***Sāsanā*** Council was formed by a Special Act of Parliament and it was entrusted with the entire responsibility for the successful preparation and holding of the Sixth Synod. At the start this Council was accommodated within the precincts of this ***Sāsana Yeikthā***.

As a preparation, a Great Sacred Cave and Monastic hostels were constructed near Kaba Aye Pagoda, Yangon, and all organization arrangements were made by the Buddha ***Sāsana*** Council.

Since the holding of the Sixth Synod was to be participated and collaborated by other ***Theravāda*** countries and their ***Saṅgha*** or Monks, the Government sent religious missions to other ***Theravāda*** Countries (Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Laos), to obtain their agreement and collaboration to hold and to participate in the Buddhist Council. Then, in order to have one re-edited version of ***Tipiṭaka*** which will become a standard for all ***Theravāda*** Buddhists, the elder ***Theras*** from other ***Theravāda*** Countries and also from Bangladesh, (previously East Pakistan) and Japan were invited to Myanmar to edit the existing ***Tipiṭaka*** Texts again and to take part in the Synod.

Editing of Scriptures and the role of Mahāsī Sayādaw

Hence, the ***Theras*** from all ***Theravāda*** Countries joined hands to edit the ***Pāli*** scriptures after close scrutiny and dissection. This enormous task of vetting, amending, interpolating and final approving of the scriptures was done in the following manner:-

(1) The scriptures were sent to all intellectual ***Theras*** in Myanmar to compare the various draft copies with the orginals of the scriptures. The ***Theras*** who did the first work of amending, correcting, purifying and cleansing the scriptures were called as ***Mūlavisodhaka*** Sayādaws or original scrutinizing monks.

(2) As the second step, the amended drafts sent by these monks were again scrutinized and corrected by another committee of ***Visodhaka*** monks formed first at this Sāsana Yeikthā and later at Kaba Aye. These Sayādaws were called ***Paṭivisodhaka*** Sayādaws- second scrutinizing monks.

(3) After the ***Visodhaka*** Sayādaws had vetted the drafts, the fair and final drafts were sent to the printing press of the Buddha Sāsana Council for printing until they reached the stage of proofs.

(4) Again these proofs were checked and vetted by a committee of five Sayādaws, called ***Osānasodheya Paṭṭapāṭhaka*** Committee, or simply ***Osāna*** Committee. Then only corrected proofs were returned to the press for final printing.

Mahāsī Sayādaw was one of the ***Osāna Sayādaws*** who checked and examined thoroughly, tenses, spelling and punctuation marks, grammar, appropriateness of the chronological order of the texts, etc,. so that the whole text become flawless and faultless. ***Sayādaw*** had perfomed this task of ***Osāna*** from start to finish.

After these, finally printed ***Pāli*** Scriptures were vetted and approved at the Synod, the commentaries and sub-commentaries were vetted and approved according to the above procedures, and again ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** had to take the role of a member of ***Osāna*** Committee. In these roles as a member of ***Osāna*** Committee, ***Mahāsi Sayādaw*** displayed his extraordinary ability, talent with his outstanding knowledge in both ***Pariyatti*** and ***Paṭipatti. Mahāsi Sayādaw*** was the only monk who had been entrusted with the work of vetting, amending and editing single-handed successfully for the two text books on ***Visuddhi-magga*** Commentary.

Proceedings of the Sixth Synod

The opening ceremony of the Sixth Synod commenced at the great Scared Cave on the full moon day of Kason month of ***Sāsana*** Era 2498 (17th May 1954) and terminated on 19th May 1954. It was finally closed on full moon day of Kason of ***Sāsana*** Era 2500 (24th May 1956).

All together 2500 ***Theras*** from all ***Theravāda*** countries attended the council which was held in 5 sessions as follows:-

Sessions	Duration	Scriptures recited	No of Pags
First	21.2.25 to 7.7.54	5 Books of ***Vinaya***	2260
Second	15.11.54 to 29.1.55	9 Books of 3 ***Nikaya***	3439
Third	28.4.55 to 28.5.55	***Aṅguttara Nikaya***	9557
	30.5.55 to 2.7.55	6 Books of ***Abidhamma***	2302
Fourth	16.12.55 to 16.2.56	***Paṭṭhāna*** 5 (Books of Originations) of ***Abhidhamma***	2686
Fifth	23.4.56 to 24.5.56	15 treatises in 6 Books	2299

As mentioned above, in addition to the ***Pāḷi*** texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries were also printed after they have been vetted, edited and recited. So, altogether 118 volumes of over 40000 pages were recited at the Sixth Synod, and printed and published afterwards.

How the sixth synod was held

At the first Buddhist Synod, ***Mahā Kassapa Thera*** presided as ***Pucchaka***, or the questions or interrogator which ***Upāḷi Thera*** and ***Ānanda Thera*** acted as the Reciters or Repliers reciting the scriptures relevant to the questions put forward. In accordance with this precedent, two eminent personages both fluent in ***Pāḷi***, as well as mature in these learnings and ripe in experience, able to interrogate and answer from memory had to be found for the Sixth Synod. It was most fortunate for the Buddha ***Sāsanā*** because of the availability of a ***Tipiṭaka*** Sayādaw Venerable ***Vicittasārābhivaṃsa*** who could memorize and recite all the ***Tipiṭaka*** by heart, who could be assigned with the duties of a reciter at the Synod.

As to the selection of a Questioner or ***Pucchaka Sayādaw***, to assume the role of the Interrogator and Examiner. Mahāsī Sayādaw was chosen to perform the duties of ***Chaṭṭha Saṅgīti Pucchaka.***

At each session of the Synod, the Questioner began with the preliminary question which was put forward in the following manner:-

(1) At which place (or where) was this sermon or ***sutta*** delivered by the Lord ***Buddha***?
(2) For whose sake or to whom this sermon was delivered?
(3) Why was it delivered? and so on.

Then the Reciter, recited the whole sermon. The Questions were repeatedly asked and put to scrutiny. Only after being fully satisfied with the result of this scrutinization, the discourse was accepted and confirmed. After that, all ***Saṅgha*** present, had to recite the discourse simultaneously as an evidence that it has been accepted and confirmed.

In that way, all ***Tipiṭaka*** Texts, were recited at the Synod. Regarding the rehearsing of Commentaries and Sub-commentaries, they had never been scrutinized and rehearsed in the previous Buddhist Synods. Hence the Organizing Committee of ***Saṅgha*** decided that only the selected portions should be sifted and commented upon. This task was entrusted to three eminent ***Mahā Theras*** one of whom was Mahāsi Sayādaw. The other two Sayādaws gave explanatory remarks about the Commentaries relating to First, Second and Third Synod, Thereafter Mahāsi Sayādaw daily rehearsed and reported on how the sifting of the commentaries was done after the Third Synod. Only when it came to this hard task of sifting the commentaries, it became evident of Mahāsi Sayādaw's deep knowledge of ***Pariyatti*** and ***Paṭipatti*** and his scholastic qualifications. This sifting and rehearsing of the Commentaries and Sub-commentaries were held during the fourth session of the Sixth Synod.

Thus Mahāsī Sayādaw had played the dual role of ***Osāna*** Member and ***Pucchaka*** Sayādaw in the Sixth Buddhist Synod.

IX. Published and Unpublished Discourses of Mahāsī Sayādaw

As mentioned earlier, during the second world-war time, Mahāsi Sayādaw was at Seikkhun village when he was prevailed upon by his disciples to write his monumental and one of the most famous books "A Practical way of ***Vipassanā*** (Insight Meditation)" in two volumes of 858 pages which he completed in a period of seven months. Due to shortage of printing papers during war time, these 2 volumes became printed books only after the war was over.

After his arrival at the Sāsana Yeikthā in 1949 on the full moon day of Nattaw month, that is 4th December 1949, Mahāsi Sayādaw introduced the first batch of 25 meditators to the methodical practice of ***Vipassanā*** Meditation. Soon after, the meditation trainings had been given to meditators throughout the year at the ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā, which became known as Mahāsī ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā or Mahāsī Meditation Centre. During the early period, Sayādaw himself taught and preached the meditation method personally. After that, due to the increasingly large numbers of yogis with the passage of time, the recorded tape version of the ***Dhamma*** was given with effect from July 1951. In 1954, the recorded tape was copied in writing and published in book form under the title "Practical ***Vipassanā*** Meditational Exercises".

During his stay in Mahāsī Centre until his demise in 14th August 1982, in the midst of all the tasks including his participation in the 6th Buddhist Synod, Sayādaw delivered numerous ***Dhamma*** Discourses and Exhortation guidelines for monastic, and lay organizations of the Mahāsī Meditation Centre at Yangon and various townships. These Discourses had been tape-recorded and then transcribed. After being edited by Sayādaw himself, they were printed in Myanmar Language. Sayādaw also wrote a few books in Pāli Language.

According to the list prepared by the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization, the total number of these discourses in book form, runs more than 100. Still there are a number of discourses not yet printed, which are either in recorded tapes or hand-written manuscripts, which the Buddha ***Sāsanā Nuggaha*** Organization is endeavouring to turn into printed book forms.

Out of these Myanmar books, only about 44 had been translated into English so far. These books are listed in **Appendix (10).**

In reading this list, it should be noted that some of the books have been printed by various publishers under different titles and some of them have not yet been published by the Buddha ***Sāsanā Nuggaha*** Organization as yet; one Myanmar title was translated by two translators and published under different titles.

X. Monastic Organizations of the Mahāsī Meditation Centre

To assist Mahāsī Sayādaw, Patron Monks groups of Mahāsī Meditation Centre were established by Sayādaw himself before he passed away. After his passing away in August 1982, at the coordination meeting of the Buddha ***Sāsanā Nuggaha*** Organization and Patron Monks groups held at the Mahāsi Meditation Centre on 25th October 1989, the following groups of monks were formed:-

(1) Yangon Mahāsī Sāsana Yeikthā ***Ovādācariya*** Group consisting of three ***Ovādācariya*** monks,
(2) Yangon Mahāsī Sāsana Yeikthā Patrons Group consisting of ten Patron ***Kammaṭṭhāna*** monks.

On 15th December 1989 the first written constitution of these groups was passed at the meeting of Patron monks.

Again, at the annual Exhortation and ***Pūjā*** ceremony held in December 1990, the above groups were expanded and reorganized as "Organization of Patron Monks of Local and Foreign Meditation Centers", consisting of the following groups:-

(1) Five guiding ***Ovādācariya*** Sayādaw
(2) Five Patron Monks
(3) Sixty member monks

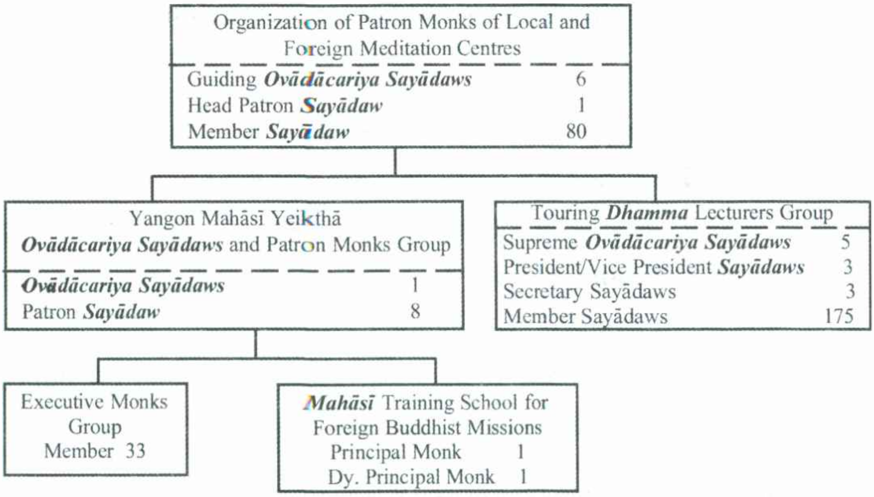
These groups were reorganized, and members increased from time to time as approved in various meeting of Patron monks.

Mahāsī Touring ***Dhamma*** Lectures group was first established in October 1 971 with the approval of Mahāsī Sayādaw and the regulations governing this group was compiled in writing under the guidance of Mahāsi Sayadaw in December 1981.

Mahāsī Training School for Foreign Buddhist Missions was opened by the Patron Monks Organization in consultation with the Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization on 10th June 1990 nearly eight years after the demise of Mahāsi Sayādaw.

This school headed by Principal Monk and Deputy Principal monk gives training in four skills of English Language to student monks selected by the Patron Monks Group with a view to make them qualified as foreign meditation teachers.

The executive Monks group were also elected to assist the Patrons Monks Group to undertake day to day functions at the Mahāsī Meditation Centre. Thus, the organization structure of the above organizations as at 31st December 2014 could be drawn as follows:-


Organization of Patron Monks of Local and Foreign Meditation Centres
Guiding *Ovādācariya Sayādaws* 6
Head Patron *Sayādaw* 1
Member *Sayādaw* 80
Yangon Mahāsī Yeikthā *Ovādācariya Sayādaws* and Patron Monks Group
Ovādācariya Sayādaws 1
Patron *Sayādaw* 8
Touring *Dhamma* Lecturers Group
Supreme *Ovādācariya Sayādaws* 5
President/Vice President *Sayādaws* 3
Secretary Sayādaws 3
Member Sayādaws 175
Executive Monks Group
Member 33
Mahāsī Training School for Foreign Buddhist Missions
Principal Monk 1
Dy. Principal Monk 1

The main functions of the Yangon Mahāsī Yeikthā's ***Ovādācariya*** Monks, Patron Monks and the executive monks are as follows:-

(1) to take care of the meditation yogis-giving 8 precepts daily, teaching ***Vipassanā*** Meditation, interviewing , giving ***Dhamma*** talks, etc.;

(2) to give precepts, ***Dhamma*** talks, conduct libation ceremony for the donors and well-wishers, and perform ordination of novices/monks;

(3) to deliver ***Dhamma*** Talks every Saturday evenings to outside yogis;

(4) to allocate duties for Touring ***Dhamma*** Lecturers to visit various townships, deliver ***Dhamma*** Talks and conduct meditation retreats there;

(5) to arrange Basic Buddhist Culture Training Courses for young students at the ***Mahāsī*** Meditation Centre during summer holidays;

(6) to make preparation for the holding of annual Exhortation and ***Pūja*** ceremony every year around the full moon day of Nattaw Month (December usually), and at the ceremony, to deliver ***Dhamma*** talks to monks and yogis from all the township ***Mahāsī*** Meditation Centres, and to hold annual meetings of monks to consider various matters including selection of office-bearers and assignment of duties;

(7) to choose trainee monks for the Mahāsī Training School for Foreign Buddhist Missions and supervise their training and examinations;

(8) to take part in the regular religious activities of the ***Mahāsī*** Meditation Centre like Waso and Kathina Robes offering,

water pouring ceremony at the sacred Banyan (Bo)tree, offering of food, lights etc, at Shwe Dagon Pagoda in commemoration of the birthday of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw;***

(9) to promote ***Sāsanā*** abroad by visiting foreign countries when invited by the well-wishers.

All the member-monks of the above monastic organizations are ***Mahāsī*** Meditation Yogis. Some of them are chief disciples of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw,*** and others are the disciples of these chief disciples, having attained various stages of the path ***(Magga)*** and Fruition ***(Phala).***

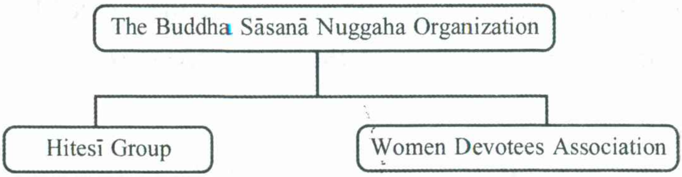
At the present Venerable Dr. ***Jaṭila*** is the presiding ***Ovādācariya*** Sayādaw.

These monastic groups truly carry the heritage of Mahāsī Sayādaw and the meditators owe great gratitude to the Sayādaws for being able to practise the ***Vipassanā*** insight meditation according to the teachings of Mahāsī Sayādaw. Generation after generation of these venerable monks will continue to carry out this task of preserving and propagating Buddha ***Sāsanā*** and the legacy of Mahāsī Sayādaw.

Even after the demise of Mahāsī Sayādaw, his legacy of ***Paṭipatti Sāsanā*** is spreading with momentum by joint efforts of these monastic organizations and the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization and its two associated groups, and in this meditation centre, insight-meditation training and practice throughout the year is possible because of these efforts. It can be said with confidence that, this ***Sayādaw*** Legacy will continue in this centre and all branch centres from generation to generation.

XI. Lay Organizations of the Mahāsī Meditation Centre

The followings are the three lay organizations which help to flourish and promote the Buddha ***Sāsanā*** and the legacy of Mahāsī Sayādaw by providing perpetual offering of 4 requisites- food, medicine, monk robes and accommodations to the monks and lay meditators at the ***Mahāsī Sāsana*** Yeiktha, where one can practice ***vipassanā*** insight meditation every day:-


The Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization
Hitesī Group
Women Devotees Association

The Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization

Before Myanmar gained Independence on 4th January 1948 the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization was formed at the residence of U Nu on 13th November 1947 by Sao Shwe Thike, and U Nu who became the first president and first Prime Minister, respectively and other 10 elderly persons including Sir U Thwin (1878 to 1967) who became the first President of the Organization. The Organization was established with a view to encourage all activities relating to ***Buddha Sāsanā*** within the entire county. In accordance with this objective Sir U Thwin donated a plot of land of 5.48 acres where the present meditation Centre is situated, on 6th September 1948, after which full preparations were made for the construction of various buildings on this site and the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization opened its office there.

Then on 14th November 1948, the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization designated this site as ***"Sāsana Yeikthā".***

As mentioned earlier the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization had been responsible to hold the oral and written examinations of the ***Tipiṭaka*** for the first time on 6th February 1949, up to 13th time in 1961 February after which the Government took over the holding of these examinations. However, these examinations were held at Fan Yin ***Dhamma*** Hall of this Meditation Centre for 46 times until January 1994.

It was at the time of holding the first examination at ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā, when the declaration to convene the 6th Buddhist Synod or Concil in 1954/1956 was made, and the establishment of ***Buddha Sāsana*** Council which was entrusted to convene this Synod was also made at the ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā.

Mahāsī Sayādaw who was invited by the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization to give meditation training at the ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā and Venerable ***Vicittasārābhivaṁsa***, the first monk who passed all oral and written ***Tipiṭaka*** examination held for the 6th time in December 1953 at this Centre, took part in the 6th Buddhist Synod as the Questioner and the Replier.

These are the major achievements of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization during the first 10 years of its establishment in addition to its role in giving all out efforts for the meditators/ Yogis at this Centre.

The Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization was headed by 21 Executive Committee Members out of which 7 are central executive committees and Sir U Thwin had acted as the President from 1947 to 1963.

After Sir U Thwin the following eminent persons became the President of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization, one after another:

(1)	U Ba Tin (Chat Thin)	- 1963-1972
(2)	U Tin (Myan Aung)	- 1972
(3)	U Chit Pe	- 1972-1973
(4)	U Nyi Pu	- 1973-1976
(5)	U Pwint Kaung	- 1976-1993
(6)	U Hla Kyaing (Ba Maw)	- 1993-1999
(7)	U Tin Wam	- 1999-2007
(8)	U Win Htain	- 2007-2013
(9)	Dr.Tint Soe Lin (Son of U Pwint Kaung)	- 2013-to date

At present, the ***Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha*** Organization is made up as follows: -

(1) 3 Patrons Members.
(2) 2 Honorary executive committee members.
(3) 21 Executive Committee members out of which 7 are central executive committee members.
(4) 10 additionanl executive committee members.
(5) 10 working groups.
(6) 1370 members at end of March 2015.

The Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization is the leading lay Organization of the Mahāsī Meditation Centre taking care of all the administrative matters of the Centre.

Hitesi Group

Hitesi means seeking mutual benefits and in line with this meaning, Hitesi Group was formed on 5th April 1966, by ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** with the initial outlay contributed by himself, to support the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization. Main function of this group is to provide food free of charge to those monks and lay meditators who are desirous of practising meditation for long duration and to those with difficulty of paying for food. The other functions of this group are to arrange ***Dhamma*** talks on Saturday evenings to outside well-wishers and yogis and to participate in various religious and charity functions carried out in the ***Mahāsī*** Meditation Centre all the year around.

At present, Hitesi Group is made up as follows.

(1) 9 Patron Members.
(2) 2 Honorary executive committee members.
(3) 21 Executive committee members out of which 7 are central executive committee members.
(4) 15 additional executive committee members.
(5) 9 working groups.
(6) 81,925 members at end of March 2015.

Hitesi Group had completed constructing a modern two-storeyed building at a cost of over K 6300 Million in 2015.

Women Devotees Association

The Women Devotees Association or the Women Yogis Assisting or Supporting Association, was formed by Mahāsī Sayādaw himself on 25th May 1978, to assist, support and protect all the yogis practising ***vipassanā*** insight meditation at the Mahāsī Meditation Centre. At present, the association is made up as follows:-

(1) 10 Patron Members.

(2) 3 Honorary executive committee members.

(3) 27 Executive Committee members out of which 7 are central executive committee members.

(4) 43 additional executive committee members.

(5) 9 working groups.

(6) 4,452 members at end of March 2015.

The main function of this Association is to give support for the yogis as far as the offering of food and accommodation is concerned.

It therefore introduced the set-up of fund for perpetual offering of food which came into existence on 12th September 1994. The main aim of the fund is to invest the donations in a bank and use the interest only for providing food on the days when there are no food donors. One tree for perpetual food offering is fixed at K 10000 and well-wishers can donate as much trees as they can. On end of March 2015, the total number of donation trees reaches 93,862 equivalent to K 938.62 million.

This Association, besides taking care of the meditation yogis shoulders all the responsibilities in food offerings made in various religious ceremonies of the Mahāsī Meditation Centre.

The above 3 lay organizations hand in hand together, therefore contribute towards the running of the Mahāsī ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā from generation to generation, thereby maintaining and preserving the legacy of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw.***

XII. Concluding Remarks

Lord Buddha's Teachings and Buddhism

The teachings of Lord ***Buddha Gotama*** had been properly recited, collected, grouped, vetted, by series of Buddhist Councils, and now were in the printed forms approved and adopted at the Sixth Buddhist Synod as the standard text of ***Theravāda*** Buddhism.

Buddhism had never been violent and never used any reprehensible methods for its spread and missions.

In 2009 the Geneva-based "International Coalition for the Advancement of Religious and Spirituality" bestowed "The Best Religion in the World" award on Buddhism after voting by more than 200 religious leaders around the world.

Buddhism in Myanmar

Since AD 1057, Buddhism flourished in Myanmar whose citizens are predominately Buddhists. At the present both ***Pariyatti*** and ***Paṭipatti Sāsanā*** are well kept, preserved and promoted in Myanmar.

Mahāsi Lineage

Mahāsī Sayādaw was of the lineage which went as far as Ven. ***UPāḷi,*** the Senior Disciple of Lord ***Buddha***, and was the successive disciple of Theelone Sayādaw and Mingun Jetavun Sayādaw.

Sixth Buddhist Synod

This Synod held for 2 years was considered to be the greatest Buddhist event since the passing away of Lord Buddha and it was made possible by the timely emergence and relentless efforts of Mahāsi Sayādaw and ***Tipiṭakadhara*** Ven. U ***Vicittasārābhivaṁsa***.

Mahāsi Posterity and legacy

The monastic organizations and the Buddha ***Sāsanā Nuggaha*** Organization with its two lay organizations keep the legacy of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw*** in good shape, and together maintained, preserved and promoted the ***Buddha Sāsana*** especially the ***Paṭipatti Sāsanā*** according to the insight-Meditation methods of ***Mahāsī Sayādaw***.

Message to readers

For those who heard and came to know Buddhism especially the ***Vipassanā*** meditation for the first time, and for those who had just an inkling about Buddhism the following message is given:-

(1) Lord Buddha never asked for submissive faith in Him or His teachings. He always insisted on discriminative examination and intelligent inquiry and not to take anything on trust, as evidenced by his sermon delivered to ***Kālāma*** Villagers, which constitutes guideline for every seeker after truth and liberation.

(2) He said- ''do not accept anything on oral teaching, by lineage of teaching, collection of scriptures, logical or inferential reasoning, reflection on reasoning, or by the seeming competence of a speaker, but when you know

for yourselves these things are wholesome, blameless, praised by the wise and lead to welfare and happiness, then you should engage in these.''

For those meditation yogis who had reached a certain stage of ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa***, they are suggested to tread this path until the final liberation is reached by continuous and diligent practice of meditation, thereby attaining the real heritage of ***Dhamma.***

For those who aspire to become the qualified meditation teachers, they are suggested to study ***Pariyatti*** as well as to practise insight meditation and to be meditative at all times, in all situation and under all circumstances so that they acquire a high degree of ***Magga, Phala*** and Fruition.

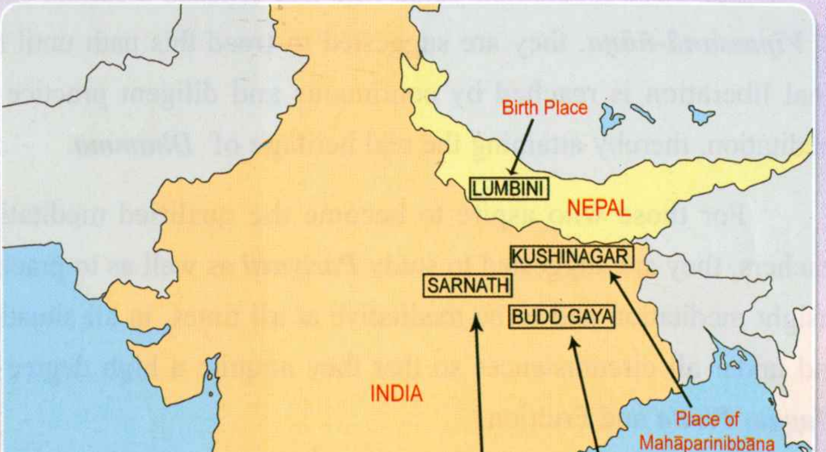
Meditation- a necessity for all

One need not convert to Buddhism to practise ***Vipassanā*** meditation. At the present time, many regional conflicts, violent riots, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, disasters, severe weather disturbances are threating the peace and security of this beautiful world. What is the answer to these problems? The answer is one and only: Meditation. If everybody meditates every day, these problems will lessen gradually and dissolve over time, and peace and happiness will surely prevail in this world.

U Khin Maung Oo
Compiler.

Appendix (1)

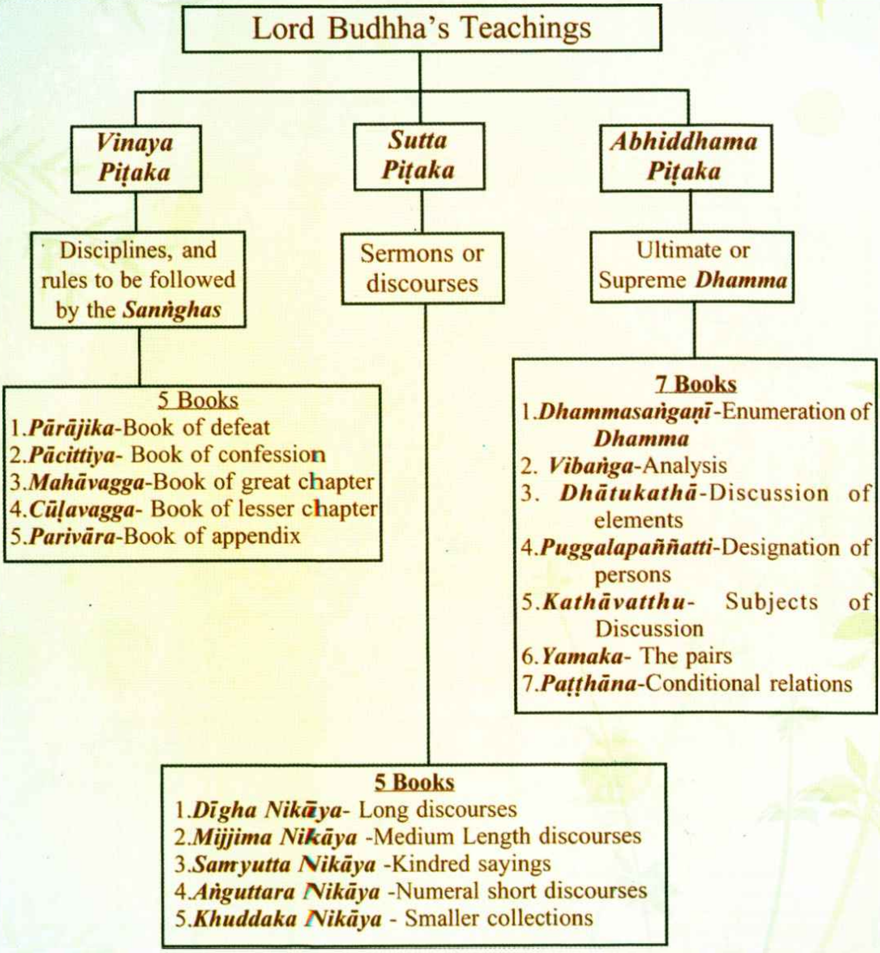
Map Showing Important places connected with Lord Buddha


Birth Place
LUMBINI
NEPAL
KUSHINAGAR
SARNATH
BUDD GAYA
INDIA
Place of Mahāparinibbāna
Place of Enlightenment
Place of First Sermon
SRI LANKA

Approximate Places only - not to scale

Appendix(2)

Chart Showing Lord Buddha's Teachings grouped in *Tipiṭaka*



Lord Budhha's Teachings

Vinaya Piṭaka

Disciplines, and rules to be followed by the ***Saṅghas***

5 Books
1.***Pārājika***-Book of defeat
2.***Pācittiya***- Book of confession
3.***Mahāvagga***-Book of great chapter
4.***Cūḷavagga***- Book of lesser chapter
5.***Parivāra***-Book of appendix

Sutta Piṭaka

Sermons or discourses

5 Books
1.***Dīgha Nikāya***- Long discourses
2.***Mijjima Nikāya*** -Medium Length discourses
3.***Saṁyutta Nikāya*** -Kindred sayings
4.***Aṅguttara Nikāya*** -Numeral short discourses
5.***Khuddaka Nikāya*** - Smaller collections

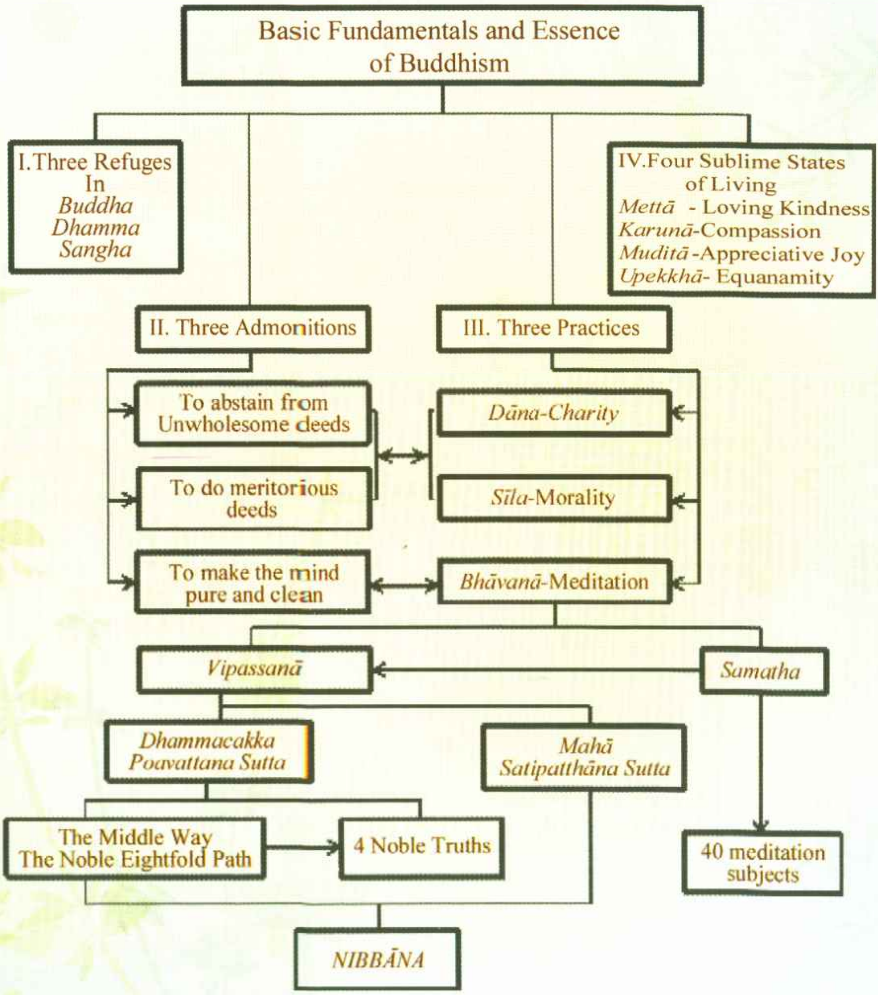
Abhiddhama Piṭaka

Ultimate or Supreme ***Dhamma***

7 Books
1.***Dhammasaṅgaṇī***-Enumeration of ***Dhamma***
2. ***Vibaṅga***-Analysis
3. ***Dhātukathā***-Discussion of elements
4.***Puggalapaññatti***-Designation of persons
5.***Kathāvatthu***- Subjects of Discussion
6.***Yamaka***- The pairs
7.***Paṭṭhāna***-Conditional relations

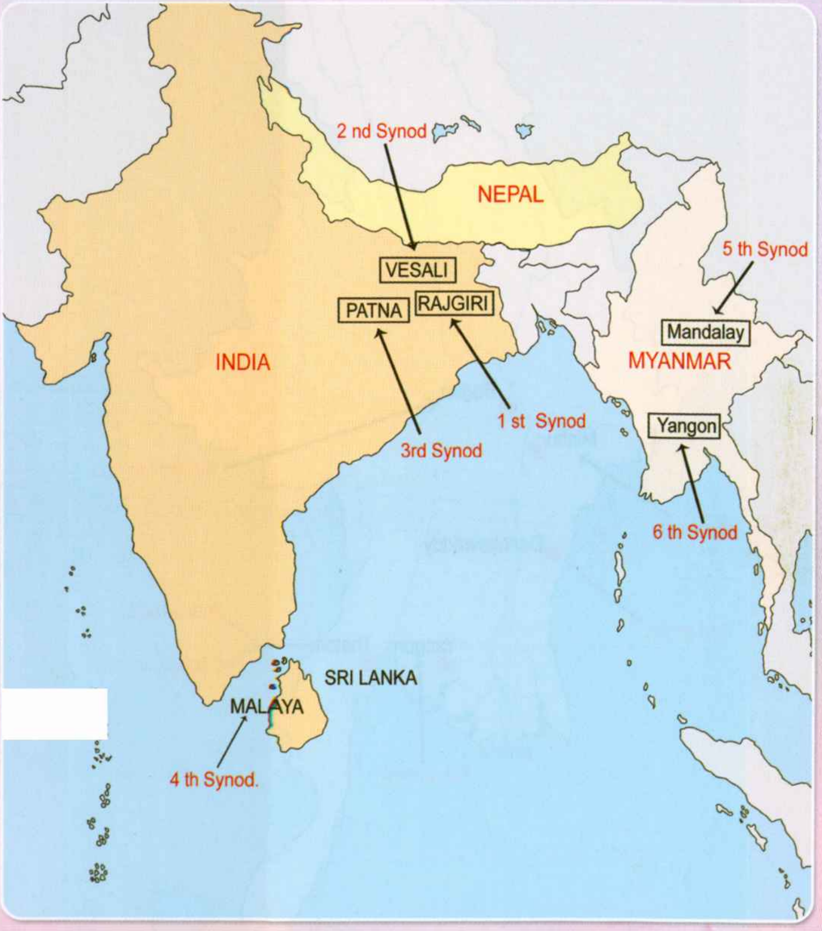
Appendix(3)

Chart sh [redacted] s and Essence of Buddhis


Basic Fundamentals and Essence of Buddhism
I.Three Refuges In *Buddha* *Dhamma* *Sangha*
IV.Four Sublime States of Living
Mettā - Loving Kindness
Karunā-Compassion
Muditā -Appreciative Joy
Upekkhā- Equanamity
II. Three Admonitions
III. Three Practices
To abstain from Unwholesome deeds
To do meritorious deeds
To make the mind pure and clean
Dāna-Charity
Sīla-Morality
Bhāvanā-Meditation
Vipassanā
Samatha
Dhammacakka Poavattana Sutta
Mahā Satipatthāna Sutta
The Middle Way The Noble Eightfold Path
4 Noble Truths
40 meditation subjects
NIBBĀNA

Appendix (4)

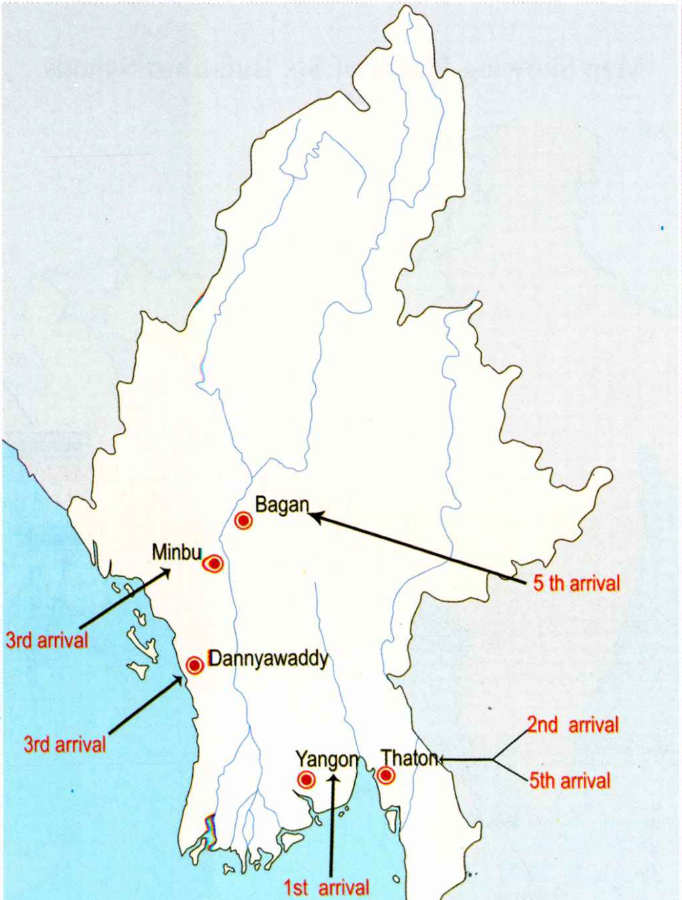
Map Showing Places of Six Buddihist Synods.


2 nd Synod
NEPAL
VESALI
PATNA
RAJGIRI
INDIA
1 st Synod
3rd Synod
5 th Synod
Mandalay
MYANMAR
Yangon
6 th Synod
SRI LANKA
MALAYA
4 th Synod.

Approximate Places only - not to scale

Appendix (5)

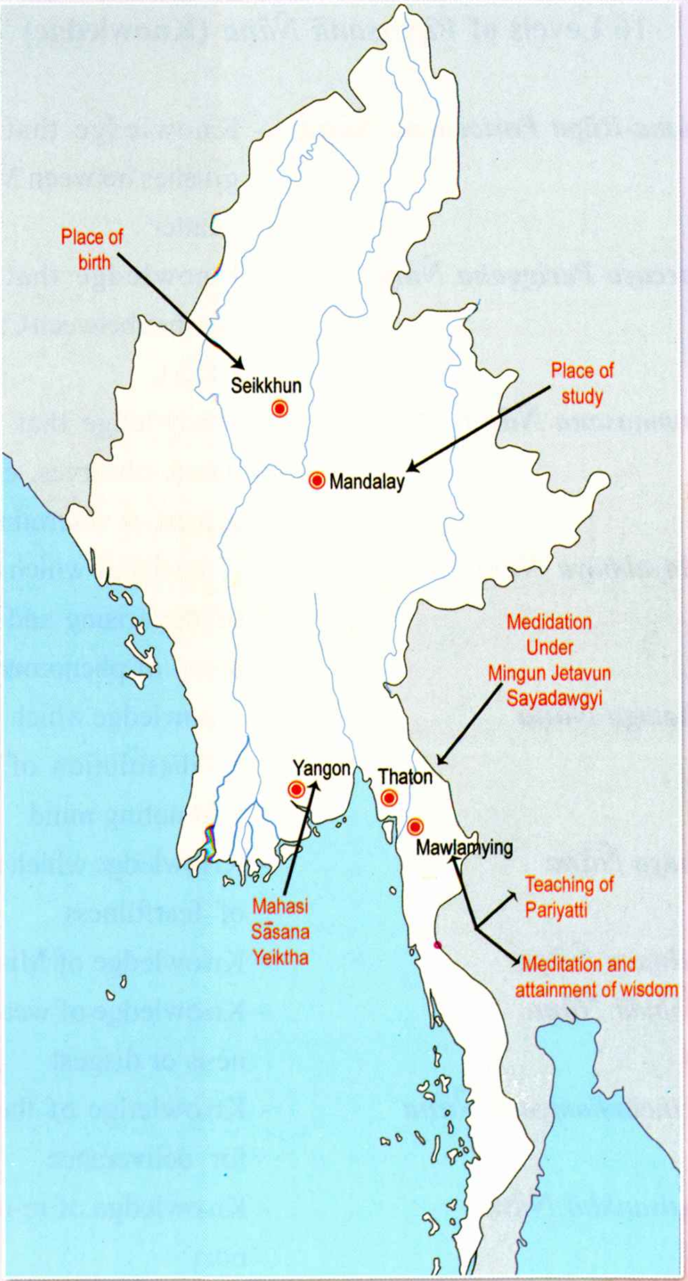
Map Showing the arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar


Bagan
5 th arrival
Minbu
3rd arrival
Dannyawaddy
3rd arrival
2nd arrival
Yangon
Thaton
5th arrival
1st arrival

Approximate Places only - not according to scale

Appendix (6)

Map Showing places connected with Mahasi Sayadaw


Place of birth
Seikkhun
Place of study
Mandalay
Medidation Under Mingun Jetavun Sayadawgyi
Yangon
Thaton
Mawlamying
Mahasi Sāsana Yeiktha
Teaching of Pariyatti
Meditation and attainment of wisdom

Approximate Places only - not according to scale

Appendix (7)

16 Levels of *Vipassanā Ñāṇa* (Kno

1. ***Nāma-Rūpa Pariccheda Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge that distinguishes between Mind and Matter
2. ***Paccaya Pariggaha Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge that distinguishes between Cause and Effect
3. ***Sammasana Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge that investigates, observes, explores, grasps or determines
4. ***Udayabbaya Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge which is aware of the arising and passing away of phenomena
5. ***Bhamga Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge which is aware of dissolution of objects and noting mind
6. ***Bhaya Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge which is aware of fearfulness
7. ***Ādīnava Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge of Misery
8. ***Nibbidā Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge of wearisomeness or disgust
9. ***Muncitukamyatā Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge of the desire for deliverance
10.***Patisankhā Ñāṇa***	- Knowledge of re-observation

11.***Sankhā rupekkha Ñāṇa*** - Knowledge which can review psycho-physical phenomena with equanimity

12.***Vuṭṭhāna Gāminī Vipassanā Ñāṇa*** - Highest state of ***sankhārupakkhā Ñāṇa***

13.***Anuloma Ñāṇa*** - The insight that ascends towards ***Nibbāna***

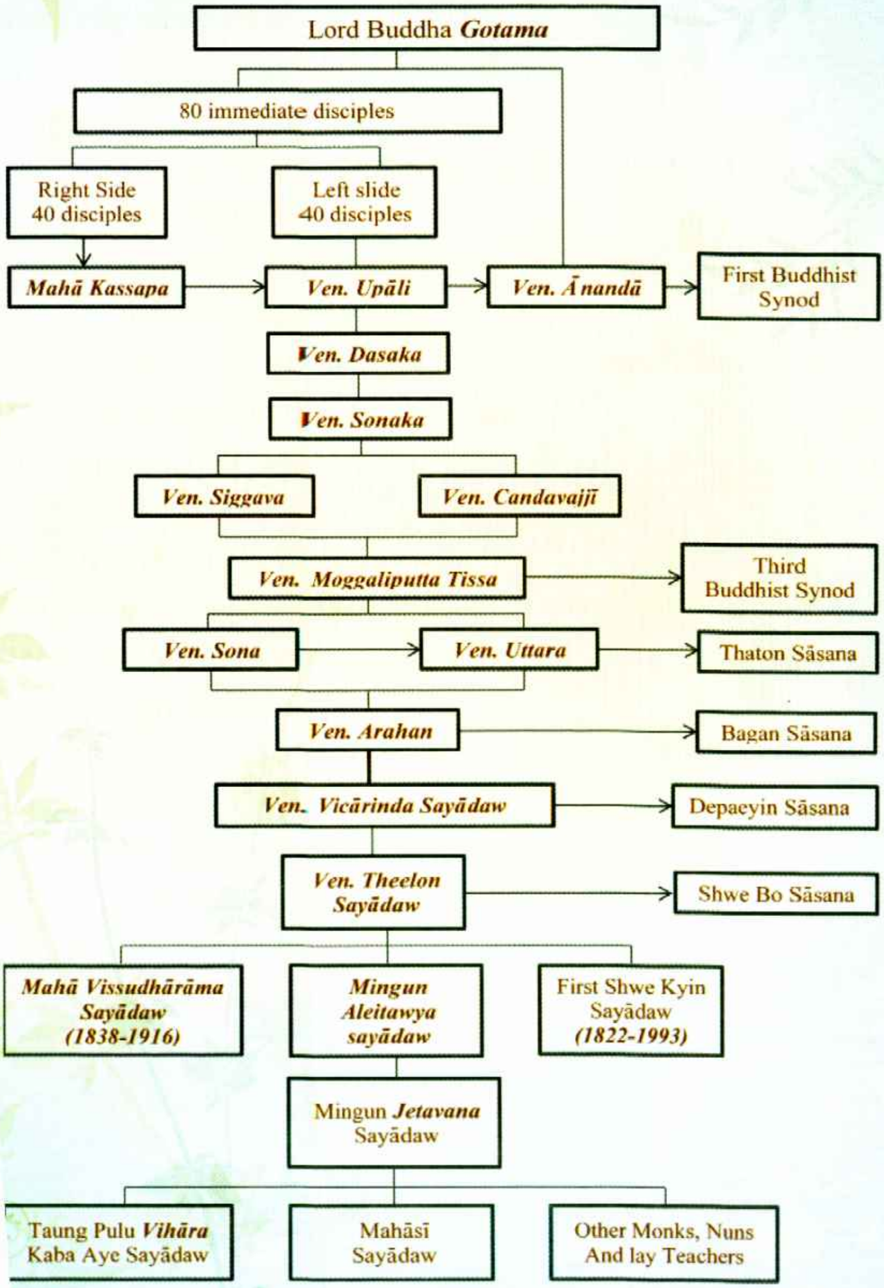
14.***Gotrabhū Ñāṇa*** - Knowing mind which reaches ahead to the ***Ñāṇa*** when object, noting mind and ***sankhāra*** are extinguished completely.

15.***Magga Ñāṇa*** - Knowing while during the moment of peaceful bliss (***Nibbāna***)

16.***Phala Ñāna*** - Knowing mind which catches a final glimpse of the moment of peaceful bliss (***Nibbāna***)

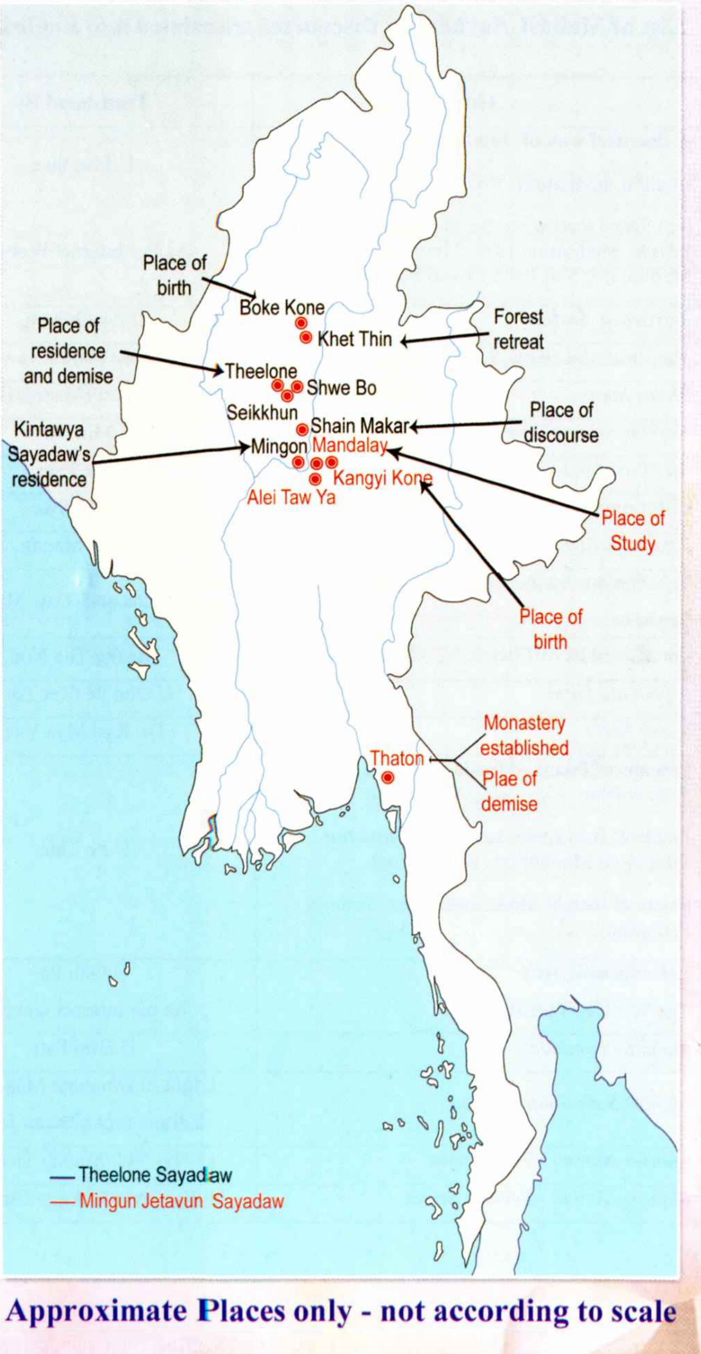
Appendix(8)

Chart showing Mahāsi Lineage


Lord Buddha *Gotama*
80 immediate disciples
Right Side 40 disciples
Left slide 40 disciples
Mahā Kassapa
Ven. Upāli
Ven. Ānandā
First Buddhist Synod
Ven. Dasaka
Ven. Sonaka
Ven. Siggava
Ven. Candavajjī
Ven. Moggaliputta Tissa
Third Buddhist Synod
Ven. Sona
Ven. Uttara
Thaton Sāsana
Ven. Arahan
Bagan Sāsana
Ven. Vicārinda Sayādaw
Depaeyin Sāsana
Ven. Theelon Sayādaw
Shwe Bo Sāsana
Mahā Vissudhārāma Sayādaw (1838-1916)
Mingun Aleitawya sayādaw
First Shwe Kyin Sayādaw *(1822-1993)*
Mingun *Jetavana* Sayādaw
Taung Pulu *Vihāra* Kaba Aye Sayādaw
Mahāsī Sayādaw
Other Monks, Nuns And lay Teachers

Appendix (9)

Map Showing places connected with Theelone Sayadaw and Mingun Jetavun Sayadaw.


Place of birth
Boke Kone
Khet Thin
Forest retreat
Place of residence and demise
Theelone
Shwe Bo
Seikkhun
Shain Makar
Place of discourse
Kintawya Sayadaw's residence
Mingon
Mandalay
Kangyi Kone
Alei Taw Ya
Place of Study
Place of birth
Monastery established
Thaton
Plae of demise
Theelone Sayadaw
Mingun Jetavun Sayadaw

Approximate Places only - not according to scale

Appendix (10)

List of Mahāsī Sayādaw's Discourses translated into English

Sr No.	Title	Translated By
1	A Practical way of *Vipassanā* (Insight meditation) Vol.I (BSNO) (or) The Treatise on the Method of *Vipassanā* Insight Meditation (The Method of *Vipassanā* Meditation) Vol 1. Part I and Part II	U Min Swe As Per Internet Website
2	*Ariyāvāsa Sutta*	U Aye Maung
3	The *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*	U Min Swe (Min Kyaw Thu)
4	*Bhāra Sutta*	U Hlin Fatt (Maung Htin)
5	*Brahma vihāra Dhamma*	U Min Swe
6	Buddhist Meditation and its Forty Subjects*	U Pe Thin
7	*Cūḷavedalla Sutta*	U Min Swe
8	*Dhammadāyāda Sutta*	U Aye Maung
9	Exhortations by the Venerable *Mahāsī Sayādaw.*	U Sunanda and Daw Mya Tin
10	Fundamentals of *Vipassanā* Meditation	Maung Tha Noe
11	*Hemavata Sutta*	U Ohn Pe (Tet Toe)
12	*Kāma Sutta*	Dr. Kya Mya Yee
13	Lessons of Practical Basic exercises in *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* Meditation (or) Practical Basi Exercises in *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* Meditation (BSNO) (or) Practical Insight Meditation (Mrs. *Sarojini* Fernando)	U Pe Thin
14	*Lokadhamma* (or) The Worldly Vicissitudes	U Ohn Pe As per internet website
15	*Mahāpaccavekkhanā*	U Htin Fatt
16	*Mahāsī Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*	Light of *Dhamma* Magazine Editors (not in book form)
17	*Mahāsī* Abroad - First Series	U Nyi Nyi /Maung Tha Noe
18	*Mahāsī* Abroad - Second Series	U Nyi Nyi / U Agga Dhamma

19	*Mālukyaputta Sutta*	U Htin Fatt
20	Meditation Teachers' Records	Myanaung U Tin Myanaung U Tin
21	*Nibbāna Patisamyutta Kahthā* (or) on The Nature of *Nibbāna*	U Htin Fatt
22	*Ovādakathā*	U Su Nanda
23	*Paṭiccasamuppāda*	U Aye Maung
24	*Purābheda Sutta*	U Min Swe
25	Purpose of Practising *Kammaṭṭhāna* Meditation*	U Min Swe
26	Practical Insight Meditation (Basic Practice) (Basic+ Progressive Stages) and 2 other Discourses	U Pe Thin
27	Practical *Vipassanā* Meditational Exercises	U Nyi Nyi
28	Progress of Insight through the Seven Stages of Purification	U Nyi Nyi
29	*Sakkapañha Sutta*	U Aye Maung
30	*Sallekha Sutta*	U Aye Maung
31	*Sammā Paribbājaniya Sutta*	U Ohn Pe (Tet Toe)
32	*Sāraniya Dhamma*	U Htin Fatt
33	*Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* (Insight through Mindfullness) by Buddhist Publication Society (or) The *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* Meditation (A Basic Buddhist Mindfulness Exercise) Discourse of the basic pretia of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā*	U Pe Thin U Pe Thin
34	*Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* (Criticisms and Replies)	*U Nyanuttava* *U Kheminda Thera*
35	*Sīlavanta Sutta*	U Htin Fatt
36	The Problems of Life	*U Sunanda*

37	The Progress of Insight (*Visuddhinana - Katha*) (or) The Progress of Insight (A Treatise on the Buddhism *Satipaṭṭhāna* Meditation)	*U Nyanponika Thera (Sri Lanka)*
38	A Practical Way of Vipassanā (Insight Meditation) Vol II (Soon to be published by BSNO) (or) The Treatise on the Method of *Vipassanā* Insight Meditation (The method of *Vipassanā* Meditation) Volume II Part I and Part II.	U Min Swe As Per Internet Website
39	The Wheel of Dhamma (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*)	U Ko Lay
40	Thoughts on *Dhamma* (Compilation of extracts from seven discourses in English)	*U Nyanaponika Thera*
41	To *Nibbāna* Via the Noble Eightfold Path	U Htin Fatt
42	*Tuvaṭaka Sutta*	Dr. Kay Mya Yee
43	*Vammika Sutta*	U Min Swe
44	*Vipassanā* (Spriitual Insight) (delivered at the Yangon University Dhammayon - May 1974)	Dr. Ko Gyi

* Translated by two translators under different titles on the same Myanmar Text.

References

In English

(1) Various Discourses of Mahāsī Sayādaw

(2) The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar by Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt (1998)

(3) The Buddha, His life and teachings by ***Piyadassi Thera***

(4) The Buddha and His teachings by Ven. ***Nārada Mahā Thera***

(5) The Six Buddhist Councils by TY.Lee.

(6) Buddha and Buddhist Synods in India and Abroad by ***Amarnath Thakur.***

(7) Biography of the most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw translated by U Min Swe and other Articles, compiled and published by Selangor Buddhist ***Vipassanā*** Meditation Society, Selangor, West Malaysia (2009)

(8) ***Sāsana Linkaya*** Treatise by Maung Htaung ***Thera*** translated by Bimela Churn Law under the title "The History of the Buddha's Religion" (2008).

(9) Myanmar-English Encyclopedic Dictionary of Buddhist Terms by Dr. U ***Nyanawara.***

(10) Various Discourses of Mahāsī Sayādaw

In Myanmar

(11) Mingun ***Jetavun*** Sayādaw and his lineage compiled by Dr. Pyone Cho (2015)

(12) ***Gambhiyatta Daethana*** by Theelone ***Thera*** (1777-1851)

(13) Mahāsi ***Sāsana*** Yeikthā Golden Jubilee Records (1309-1359 BE)

(14) Records of 75th Anniversary of Mahāsi ***Vipassanā*** Teaching at Seikkhun Village (2014)

(15) Annual Reports of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization, ***Hitesi*** Group and Women Devotees Association

(16) Annual Reports of the Monastic Organizations of Mahāsī ***Sāsana*** Meditation Centre

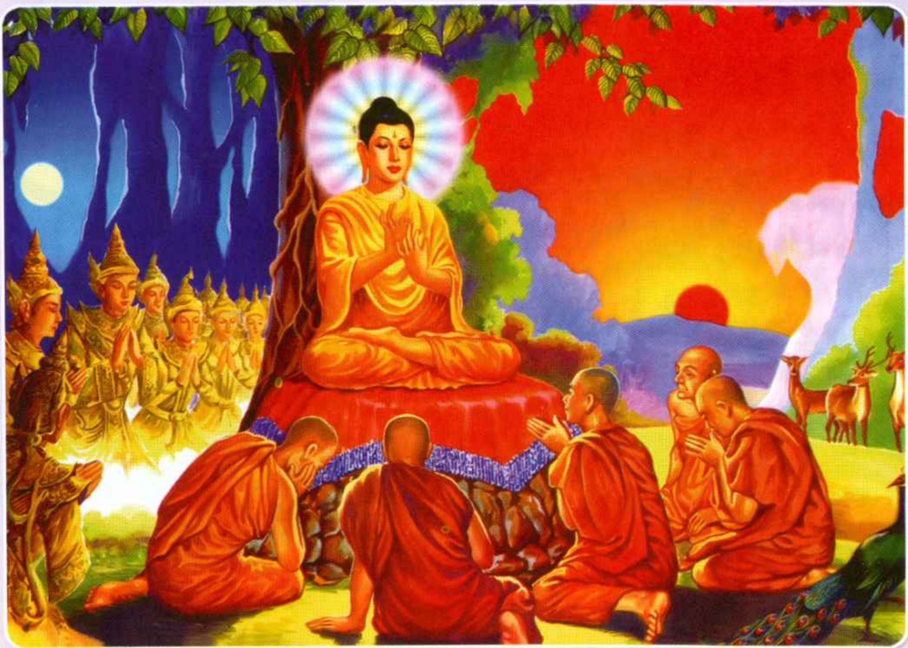
(17) Quarterly Mahāsī Newsletters

(18) A compilation of the Biography of Mahāsī Sayādaw, his teachings, discourses by Pho Zar Ni (Mahāsī Yogi) (2014)

(19) A short paper prepared by Dr. Win Naing Kyaw

(20) Notes prepared by U Thein Win

(21) Various Discourses of Mahāsi Sayādaw



Lord Buddha delivering *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* at Sarnath, Benares, India

Image of Lord Buddha entering into *Mahāparinibbāna* at *Kusinaram Kushināgār*, India

Tipiṭaka or three Baskets of Buddhist Scriptures with commentaries

Satta Panna Cave of *Wabara* Hill at Rajgiri , India where First Buddhist Synod was held

***Walikaryon* Temple, *Vesali*, India, where Second Buddhist Synod was held**

Patna *(Pataliputta)*, India where Third Buddhist Synod was held

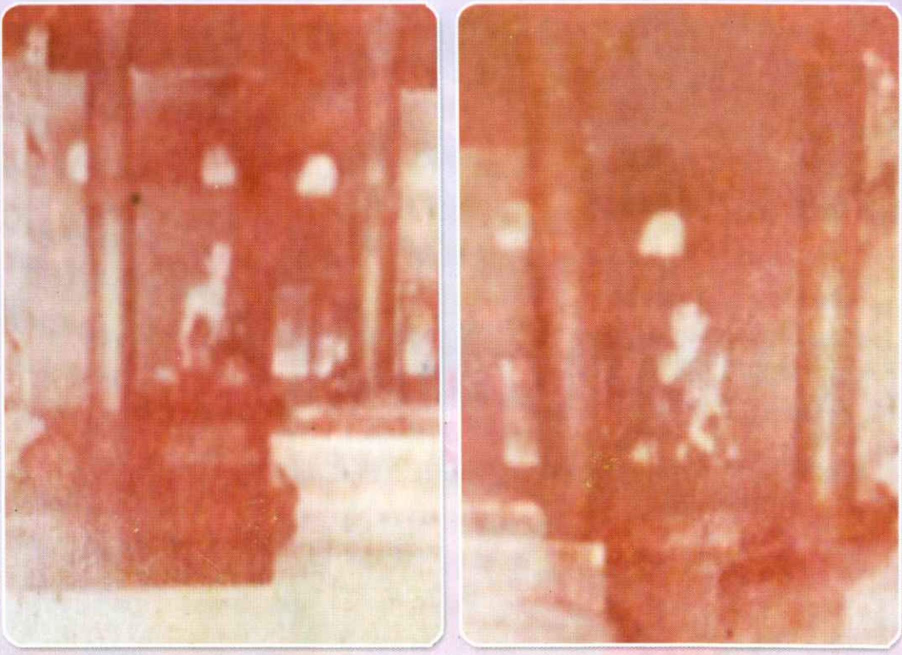
Aloka Cave *(Alu Vihara)*, of Malaya, Sri Lanka where Fourth Buddhist Synod was held

Pañcama Saṅgīti Tipiṭaka Books Dhammaceti
All Pañcama Saṅgīti Tipiṭaka Pāḷi texts
729 Marble stone slabs

Marble Stone Slabs on which *Tipiṭaka* was inscribed at Kuthodaw Pagoda of Mandalay where Fifth Buddhist Synod was held

The *Mahāpasana* Cave (The Great Sacred Cave), in Yangon where Sixth Buddhist Synod was held

Shwe dagon Pagoda at Yangon



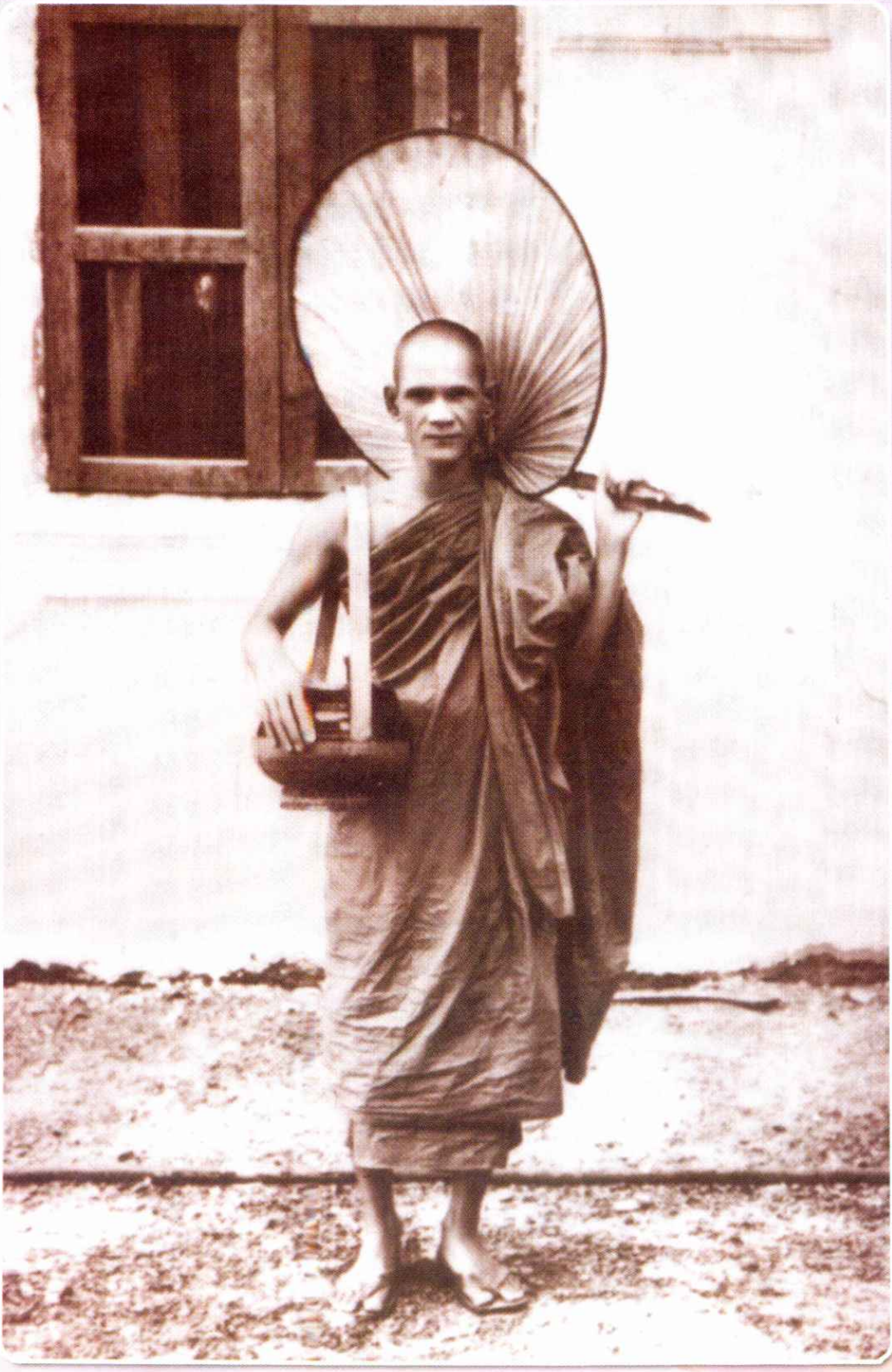
Images of Shin *Sona* and Shin *Uttara* (at *Kusināṛam* Temple at Beelin Township) who came to Thaton and preached Buddhism

Image of Shin *Arahan* who brought Buddhism to Bagan

Novice Shin *Sobhana*

Shin *Sobhana* ordained as Monk

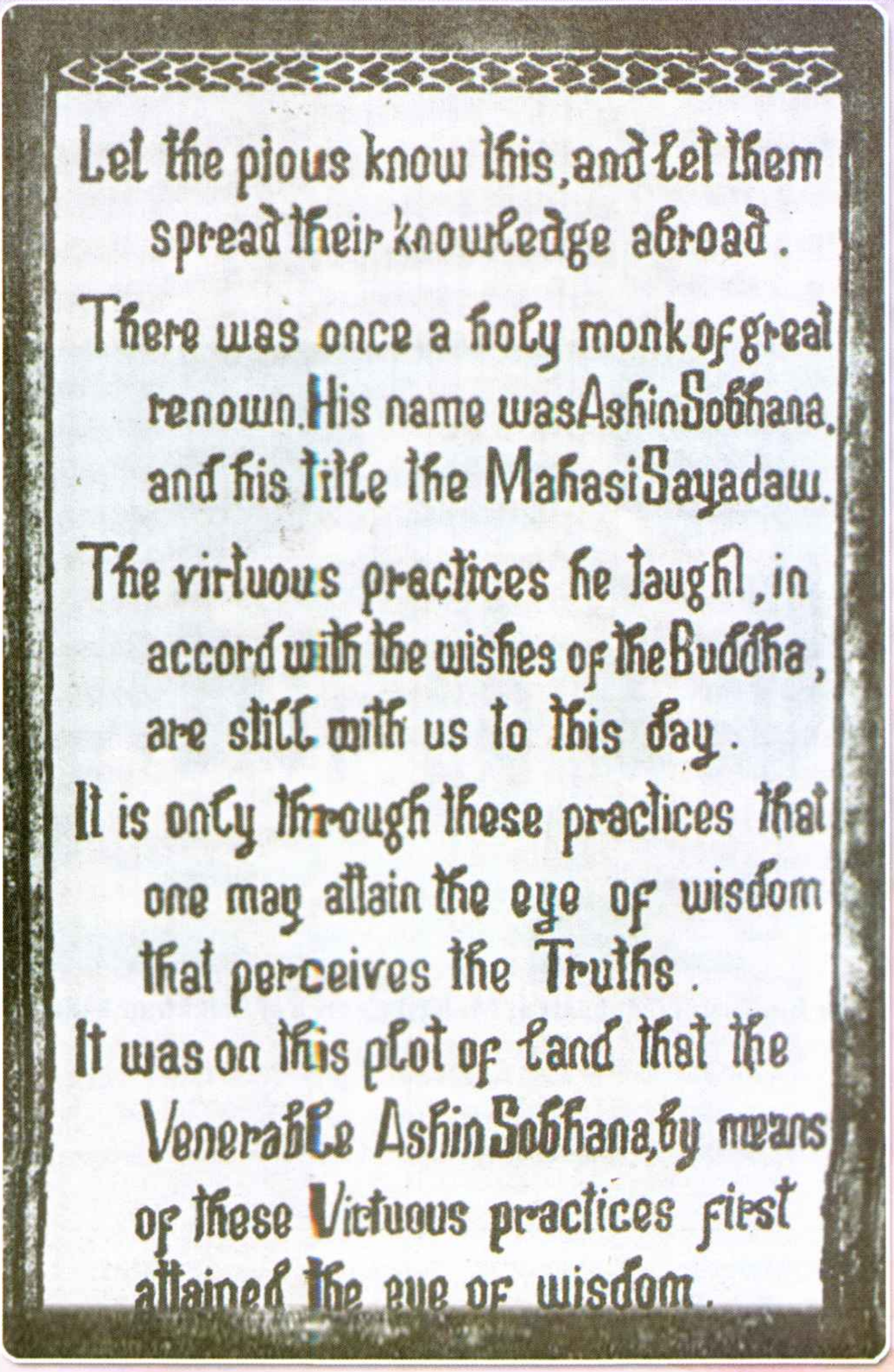
Seikkhun Village, Shwebo where Mahāsi Sayādaw was born



Mahāsi Sayādaw at age 24 (1928) when he first arrived at the Taungwaigalay Monastery, Mawlamyaing

Mahāsi Sayādaw and first batch of other disciples at Mingun *Jetavun* Sayādaw

Stone Pillar erected at Taungwaingalay Monastery, Mawlamyaing, Where Mahāsi Sayādaw first attained the eye of wisdom



Let the pious know this, and let them spread their knowledge abroad.

There was once a holy monk of great renown. His name was Ashin Sobhana, and his title the Mahasi Sayadaw.

The virtuous practices he taught, in accord with the wishes of the Buddha, are still with us to this day.

It is only through these practices that one may attain the eye of wisdom that perceives the Truths.

It was on this plot of land that the Venerable Ashin Sobhana, by means of these Virtuous practices first attained the eye of wisdom.

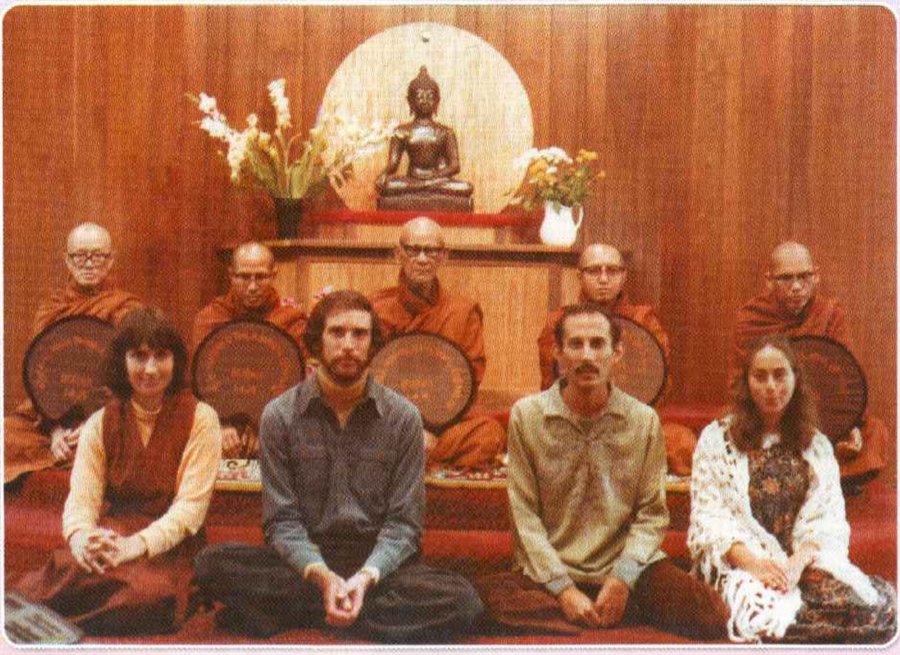
English inscription at the Stone Pillar of Taungwaingalay Monastery

The Big Drum (Mahāsi) at Mahāsi Centre of Seikkhun Village

Mahāsi Sayādaw newly arrived at the Sāsana Yeikthā, Yangon

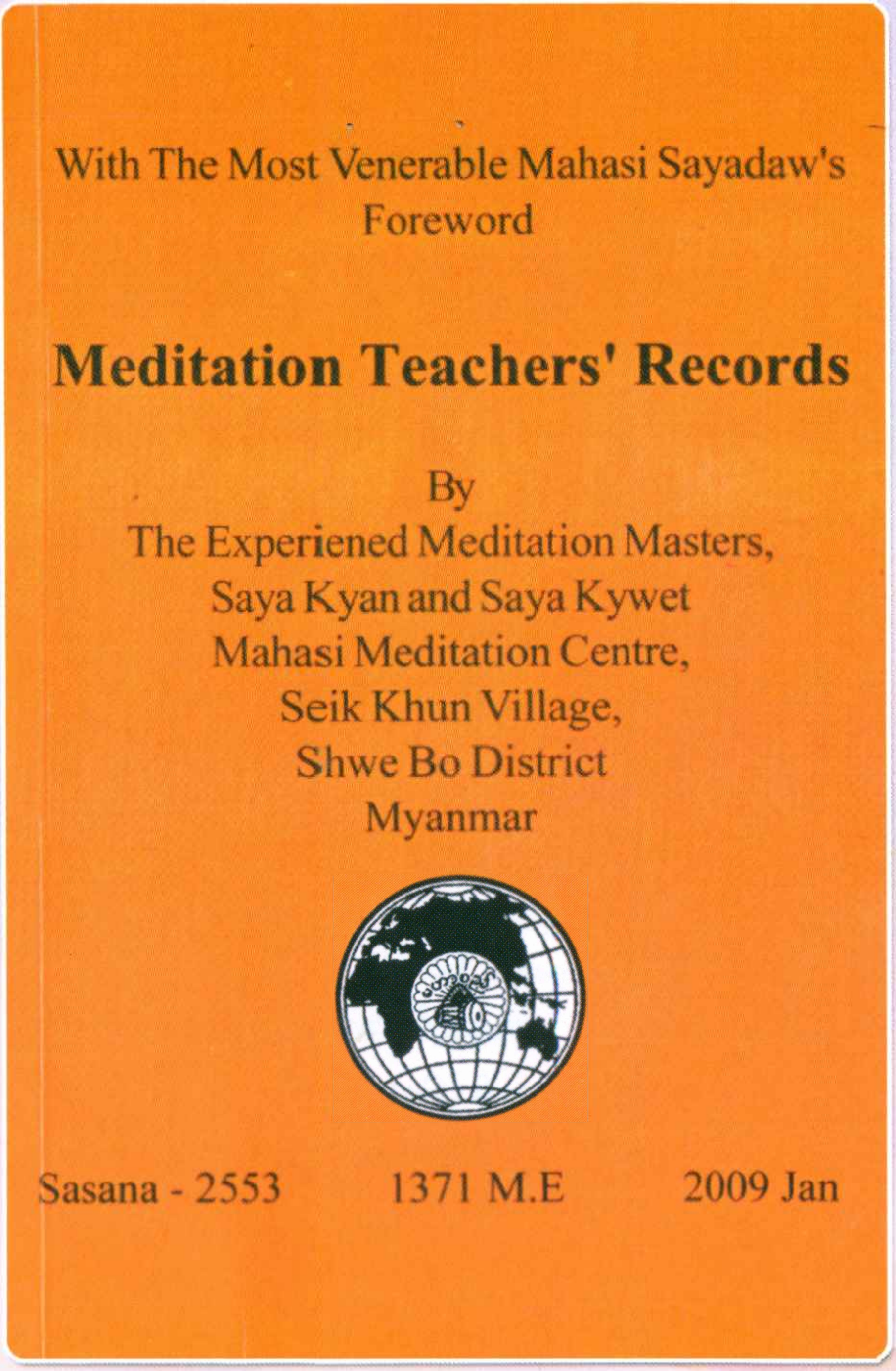
The first original building at the *Sāsana* Yeikthā where Mahāsi Sayādaw stayed

Mahāsi Sayādaw in India (1959)



Mahāsi Sayādaw at the Insight Society, Barre in U.S.A (1979)

Pictures of Saya Kyan and Stone Pillar erected at Seikkhun Village in memory of Saya Kywet, Disciples of Mahāsi Sayādaw and lay meditation teachers



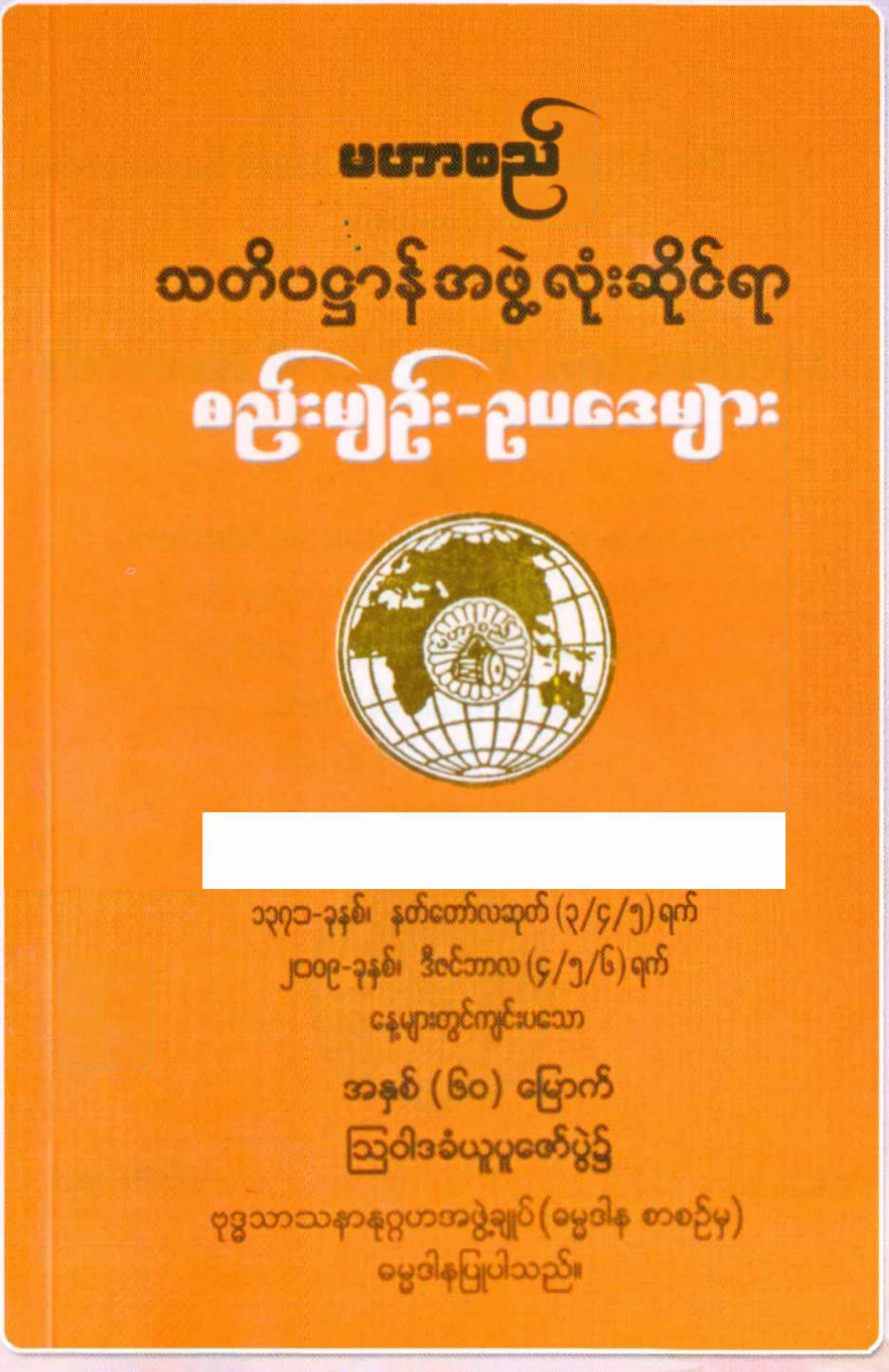
With The Most Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw's
Foreword

Meditation Teachers' Records

By
The Experiened Meditation Masters,
Saya Kyan and Saya Kywet
Mahasi Meditation Centre,
Seik Khun Village,
Shwe Bo District
Myanmar

Sasana - 2553 1371 M.E 2009 Jan

Meditation Teachers' Records by the experienced Meditation Teachers



မဟာစည်

သတိပဋ္ဌာန်အဖွဲ့လုံးဆိုင်ရာ

စည်းမျဉ်း-ဥပဒေများ

[redacted]

၁၃၇၁-ခုနှစ်၊ နတ်တော်လဆုတ် (၃/၄/၅) ရက်
၂၀၀၉-ခုနှစ်၊ ဒီဇင်ဘာလ (၄/၅/၆) ရက်
နေ့များတွင်ကျင်းပသော
အနှစ် (၆၀) မြောက်
ဩဝါဒခံယူပူဇော်ပွဲ၌
ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာနုဂ္ဂဟအဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ဓမ္မဒါန စာစဉ်မှ)
ဓမ္မဒါနပြုပါသည်။

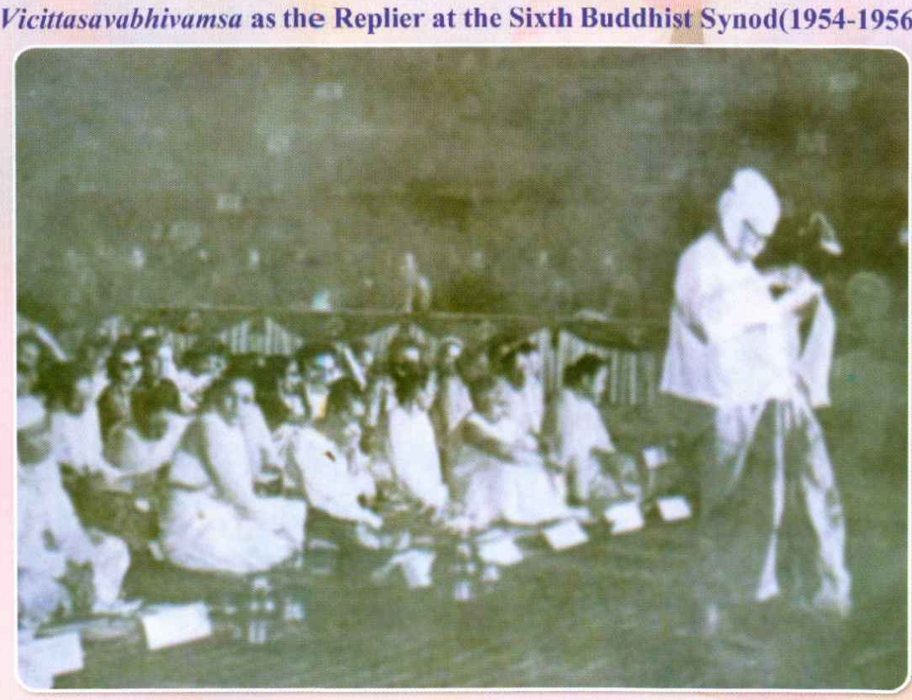
Rules and Regulations relating to *Satipatthana Yogis*

Myatheintan Pagoda at Theelon Village where relics of Theelon Sayādaw were enshrined

မူလမင်းကွန်းဇေတဝန်ကမ္မဋ္ဌာန်းကျောင်းတိုက်

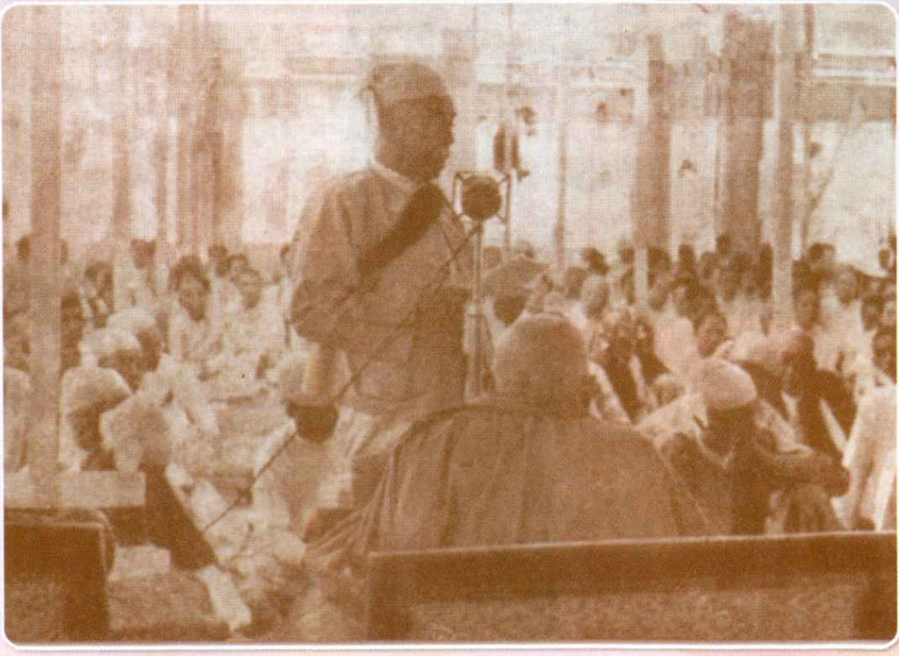
Mingun *Jetavun* Monastery at present

Mahāsī Sayādaw as the Questioner and *Tipitaka Dara U Vicittasavabhivamsa* as the Replier at the Sixth Buddhist Synod(1954-1956)



Sir U Thwin, The President of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization at the Sixth Buddhist Synod

Mahāsi Sayādaw performing the task of Osana Committee member (checking and vetting the texts of Pali Scriptures)



Opening Ceremony of the First *Tipitaka* Examination at *Sāsana* Yeikthā

Picture of Myanmar and Pali Discourses and English Discourses of Mahāsi Sayādaw

Patron Monks of Mahāsī Meditation Centre

Mahāsī Training School for Foreign Buddhist Missions at Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Yangon

Picture of Sir U Thwin, the First President of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization

Office of the Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization

Office of the *Hitesī* Group and new two Streyed Building

U Ba Tin (Check Thin) (1963-1972) **U Tin (Myan Aung) (1972)**

U Chit Pe (1972-1974) **Sithu U Nyi Pu (1972-1976)**

Pictures of the Succeeding Presidents of the *Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha* Organization after Sir U Thwin

U Pwint Kaung (1976-1993)

U Hla Kyaing(1994-1999)

U Tin Wan (1999-2007)

U Win Htain (2007-2014)

Pictures of the Succeeding Presidents of the *Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha* Organization after Sir U Thwin

Dr. Tint Soe Lin (2014- to date)

Pictures of the Succeeding Presidents of the *Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha* Organization after Sir U Thwin

Vice President Daw Khin Nwe Yee
Women Devotees Association

The Women Devotees Association

ADDENDA

The followings are the latest figures up to 31st December, 2015.

No.		No	Pages
1.	No of Mahāsī Branch Meditation Centres		
	- in Myanmar	643	19
	- abroad	39	19
2.	No of meditators/ yogis	174,94,152	19
3.	No of yogis who are allowed to listen to tape-recorded "Progress of Insight through the seven Stages of Purification"	68,855	19
4.	Member Sayādaws of Organization of Patron Monks	84	45
5.	Member Sayādaws of Touring ***Dhamma*** Lecturers Group	183	45
6.	Members of Executive Monks Group	37	45
7.	Members of the Buddha Sāsanā Nuggaha Organization	13,74	50
8.	Members of ***Hitesi*** Group	81,983	51
9.	Members of Women Devotees Association	4,455	52
10.	No. of Food Donation Trees	1,03,556	52
11.	Total value of Food Donation Trees	K 10,355.6 Mill	52

* * * * * * * * *